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THE CONNECTION OF NATURAL AND REVEALED THEOLOGY:

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO ILLUSTRATE THE
EVIDENCES AND DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY

BY THEIR RELATION TO THE
INDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.

WITH
NOTES AND AUTHORITIES

COLLECTED FROM THE
MOST EMINENT ANCIENT AND MODERN WRITERS.

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Arena non sine calce.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES,
IN THE STRAND.

1818.

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Printed by A. Strahan,
Printers-Street, London.

“ The principle in which this branch of logic hath its foundation, is a native bent, and propensity of the mind, strengthened by experience, and confirmed by habit, from which we are involuntarily led to expect that nature and truth are uniform and analogous throughout the whole universe; that similar causes of whatever kind, will in similar circumstances at all times produce similar effects; or if the causes cannot be known, that similar effects, will explain, illustrate, and account for similar effects. This principle, then, resolves itself into similitude; and reason acts upon it, as in all other cases, by comparing and judging. Thus we argue from truths which have been proved by direct reason, or which are obvious to simple apprehension, to others which are similar in cause or effect; and if upon comparing and judging, the principle will bear us out, we conclude the latter to be true: a conclusion which will supply us with a kind and degree of truth sufficient for most of the uses and purposes of human life.

“ This method of reasoning is analogy, which according to Quintilian, ‘ is to refer a thing that is doubtful to something similar and different, that uncertainties may derive their proof from certainties.’ ”

Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth.

“ The probability of most things, and the possibility of all things contained in the Scriptures, may well be discerned by reason itself, which makes their existence the more easy to be believed.”

Baxter's Saints' Rest, Part ii. Ch. iii.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is the object of the following work to exhibit a popular view of what may be termed the *Intellectual* evidence of the Christian Revelation. Its direct and historical evidence has been so amply unfolded, and been laid before the public in such a variety of forms, that it would seem to be almost a hopeless attempt to throw any further light upon this subject. Nor have those internal proofs of our religion which arise from the excellency of its doctrines been by any means overlooked or forgotten. But it is still a desideratum to possess a manual of those evidences which connect it more immediately with the philosophy of the human mind, which point out its relation to the various faculties of man, to the order and constitution of the world; and which may thus demonstrate its *pre-*

sumptive truth, from its alliance with our intellectual powers and with the moral laws of nature.

Though much of this kind of reasoning is to be found scattered in the works of our English divines, yet little has hitherto been attempted in the way of a regular and systematic arrangement of this species of evidence. What may be termed the *Philosophy of Christianity*, has accordingly been but little cultivated, though the philosophic principles of the arts and sciences have been developed with considerable success. Thus Professor Campbell has pointed out the connection of rhetoric with the various principles of our nature, whilst Adam Smith has presented the world with an admirable specimen of the same kind of reasoning, in his history of astronomy and of the ancient physics. For as the general principles of all sciences have their foundation in the constitution of our minds, so in a particular degree must this be true in those sciences which are more immediately related to our moral faculties. If it be a fact that any Revelation has been given by

God to man, it must have been given through the intervention of our reason; not only its evidences, but its doctrines must bear some proportion and correspondence to our intellectual faculties. Hence it will become not merely an interesting, but an important subject of enquiry, to ascertain, as far as we are able, the nature, and extent of this connection.

Perhaps, however, the reason why this department of theology has hitherto been so little cultivated, may be traced to the very obscure and imperfect manner in which the philosophy of the human mind was studied, till Dr. Reid had established it on the foundation of inductive science. Even now the name of metaphysics is esteemed by many as synonymous with all that is dark, uncertain, and mystical: they confound the ontological subtleties of the schoolmen with the plain phenomena of self-observation, and will not be persuaded to think that there is no more connection between a faithful history of the mind, and the imaginary speculations of antiquity, than between the experimental philosophy

of Newton and the gratuitous hypotheses of Des Cartes.*

When we appeal to the internal principles of our nature, we appeal to them as facts and phenomena of which every man is conscious ; we do not attempt to explain them as causes but to exhibit them as facts. Upon these fundamental principles, all truth and all evidence must depend. We can be assured of the truth of Revelation through no other channels than those through which we derive our ordinary knowledge ; and in proportion as we can trace out this connection between faith and reason, we shall enjoy a clear and philosophic perception of the credibility of Revealed Religion.

By this method we shall also be enabled to determine the question which has so long been agitated respecting the import and origin of Natural Religion. For if the doctrines of Revelation have a connection with the principles of the human mind,

* See an eloquent apology for this branch of science in *Stewart's Philosophical Essays*, ch. 1. & 2. Also a masterly review of the same work in *Bowdler's Select Pieces*, vol. ii.

they must in some measure be natural, as well as revealed ; they are not to be regarded as arbitrary appointments, but as possessing a real foundation in the nature and constitution of man. Yet if this be true of the peculiar doctrines of Revelation, it must apply with still greater force to those duties that are founded on the obligations which a creature owes to his Creator and Preserver. To attempt to resolve our whole perception of such obligations into mere tradition and acts of memory, is evidently to misrepresent the state and condition of our minds.

But on the other hand, it is equally unreasonable to deny that man was originally instructed by his Maker in his religious duties ; for it is contrary both to history and to reason to imagine that an intelligent creature should have been left at his first creation, in total ignorance of those obligations which are due to the Author of his being. Upon the principles of sober theism, as well as of Christianity, therefore, the truth of a *first* revelation should be admitted. But when such an original Revelation is allowed, it is impossible to

ascertain the exact force of its influence upon succeeding generations. It is probable that it would have some effect even upon the most barbarous and unenlightened; yet this effect, be it more or less, would operate through the principles of reason and conscience, and should never be viewed as a barren historical tradition, but as a moral force acting in concert and combination with our rational and intellectual powers.

Although this appears to be the most just and philosophical account which can be given of the origin and foundation of Natural Theology, yet it is not essential to our argument that either this or any other theory should be here admitted. The question is here taken up simply as a matter of fact, that whether Christianity be true or false as a Divine Revelation, it has numerous correspondences with reason and nature; that there are plain and manifest tokens in it of likeness and resemblance to our moral treatment; and that even a great part of the difficulties and the apparent objections which are to be found in the one, will also

upon examination, either equally or partially apply to the other.

Now this, being a matter of fact, is to be shown by comparison and illustrated by evidence. It depends upon an induction of numerous particulars which are brought forward to substantiate a general proposition. Whether you believe with Clarke and Wollaston that the native faculties of reason are, in some degree, able to make out these moral deductions; or whether you agree with Ellis and Leland in supposing them to be derived entirely from an early Revelation; still, it being a fact acknowledged by all parties, that such deductions are now approved by our understandings, it becomes of great importance to ascertain the nature and extent of this harmony between Natural and Revealed Theology.

Without pledging any man therefore to a particular theory as to the *origin* of Natural Theology, this term is here used in its most general and comprehensive acceptation, as comprising all those marks of wisdom and design which may be recog-

nized by the faculties of man, in the human character, or in the works of creation. Though some may be of opinion that neither these marks of wisdom and design, nor the duties which result from them would have been discoverable without the aid of a Divine Revelation, whilst others may be disposed to attribute something more to the native powers of the mind; yet this difference of sentiment can have no effect whatever upon the general force of our argument. It is equally true that reason approves of these deductions, whether she could have originally invented them or no; it is equally true that such deductions must be *natural*, that is, congenial to reason and nature, whether our unassisted faculties could have produced them, or whether some superior power were at first requisite to bring them before the mind. This is admitted even by those writers who are the least disposed to exaggerate the effects of our natural abilities. "It cannot be denied," says Leland, "that it is a real and great service to religion to show that the main principles and duties of it are what right reason must approve."

“ Natural Religion or the law of nature is not so called because it was originally discovered by natural reason, but because, when once made known, it is what the reason of mankind duly exercised approves, as founded in truth and nature.”* This is all that our argument requires, and less than this cannot be acknowledged without totally giving up the authority of reason in matters of religion ; a doctrine which is equally destructive of Natural and of Revealed Theology.

I have thought it expedient to make these observations, that the general scope and intention of the work might not be misunderstood. It was first and principally designed for men of a speculative turn of mind, who have been accustomed to contemplate any Revelation as so highly improbable, that scarce any degree of evidence could persuade them of its truth. For as on all moral subjects much will

* See Leland’s Advantage and Necessity of Revelation, vol. i. sect. 1. Also vol. ii. chap. 1. See also Ellis’s Knowledge of Divine Things. Introduction p. 23. and p. 252.

depend upon that state of mind with which we enter on our investigations, it appeared to be of great importance to lay before them a full and candid statement of this question, as it might be considered by a sober and unprejudiced observer of nature. There is nothing here taken for granted which a serious believer in the truths of Natural Religion ought not to admit ; nothing which is not, in some degree, countenanced and supported by the opinions of the ancient philosophers or of some modern unbelievers in Christianity ; or which is not fairly deducible from the principles of rational theism. From such facts, we have argued first as to the presumptions in favour of Revelation in general ; and then have endeavoured to ascertain the leading doctrines which, it is probable, would be contained in such a Revelation ; and we have afterwards compared these probabilities with the doctrines which are actually made known by the *Christian* Revelation.

It should be remembered, however, that we do not attempt to push our enquiries beyond the range of probable and presumptive reasoning, leaving the direct and

historical evidence of Christianity to furnish a full and satisfactory attestation to its truth. It is our object to clear away those previous prejudices which so frequently prevent the fair investigation of historical evidence. Having effected this purpose, we resign the student to those learned and respectable writers who have authenticated the canon of Scripture, and who have shown, from incontestible arguments, the divinity of the Christian Revelation.

Although this be the real object of the work which is here submitted to the public, yet it has been deemed expedient, for a fuller display of the various details which compose the argument, to discriminate, as far as possible, between the probabilities which belong to Revelation in general and those doctrines which are made known to us by the Christian Revelation. For this purpose, the first part is devoted to the consideration of such principles as on the supposition of any Revelation might be reasonably expected to enter into its system. These are collected from the natural suggestions of our minds and from our obser-

vations on the government of Providence. Though it is not pretended that, in all cases, we can nicely distinguish our views from the associations of that Revelation with which we are familiar ; or that, in some instances, we may not have fallen upon what lawyers would term *leading questions*, that is, questions which carry with them their own answers ; yet this, however it may affect the speculative beauty of the work, is, in reality, the fullest confirmation of that reasoning which is here employed. For if it be impossible to speculate rationally concerning any *supposed* Revelation without adopting the generality of those doctrines which have actually been inculcated in the Scriptures, surely this ought to be esteemed as no slight indication of the indissoluble connection of the *Christian* Revelation with the dictates of conscience and the deductions of reason.

To convince any man of the force and reality of this kind of reasoning, let him attempt to reverse the leading particulars which are here brought forward as likely to enter into any Revelation. Let him endea-

vour to imagine a Revelation which was *not* founded upon miracles, the discoveries of which were neither important nor desirable ; which had given no account of the creation of man, of his being created in innocence, and of his fall from that innocence ; which did not correspond to the principles of reason, nor to the faculties of the human mind ; which was not adapted to the present state of the world ; which did not inculcate the unity of God ; which contained no doctrines incomprehensible to reason ; which provided no atonement for our sins ; which held out no terrors to the impenitent ; the author of which was not distinguished for virtue or dignity ; which offered no spiritual assistance ; which adduced no fresh arguments for a future life or for a state of rewards and punishments after death ; which exhorted us to confide upon our own merits, rather than on the Divine mercy ; which had not promoted the knowledge, happiness, and civilisation of the world ; which was not adapted to the capacities of the poor, the truth of which had not been admitted by the generality of the

learned ; which had been opposed by men of the greatest virtues and probity ; which had not been distinguished by its moral effects, &c. &c. I say, let any man attempt to frame suppositions of this kind, and he will perceive how unreasonable it is to undervalue our argument on account of its want of originality. It is the solidity of these speculations which detracts from their novelty ; it is the closeness of this connection between Reason and Revelation which prevents our amusing the reader with anomalies and contradictions.

But although this work was originally undertaken with no other aim than an attempt to counteract the prejudices of unbelievers, yet, as the author proceeded in his plan, he found himself involved with opinions of quite an opposite description. Every presumptive argument to show the *truth* of Christianity from its agreement with the sentiments of right reason, became also an evidence of its *wisdom*, and consequently an evidence against those who would divorce it from reason and nature. Thus the same artillery which he had

pointed against the enemies of Christianity was found to be equally efficient against its mistaken friends ; no small confirmation to his own mind, that the ground which he had taken was safe and tenable, and that truth and reason and nature were his allies in this apology for the Christian Revelation.

To estimate the force of this kind of evidence with fairness and candour, it is necessary to review it with a calm, contemplative, and philosophic eye ; to remember that an argument of this nature is strictly cumulative, and that consequently the loss of a few presumptions will not endanger the safety of the rest ; that, in many cases, the evidence is to be multiplied by its incidental connection with some other probability, that the aggregate weight of the whole must be very considerable, however little any one may be disposed to allow to each independent part ; and that, supposing nothing more to follow than the bare possibility that Christianity may be true, yet every man is bound by reason and self-interest, and by all the obligations of Natural Religion, to institute a serious en-

quiry into the evidence of this possible Revelation.

As an apology for that homeliness of style and manner, which to many may wear an appearance of carelessness and neglect, the author begs leave to remark, that it is in fact the result of much study and design. After repeated attempts at a more regular style of composition, he has constantly found that the force of the argument seemed to suffer in exact proportion as it was accompanied with these exterior embellishments. Such is the delicate texture of that species of reasoning which is here attempted, that it will not endure any thing beyond the utmost simplicity and plainness of language. Had he worked up his materials into a uniform and connected discourse, though something might have been gained in appearance, yet much would have been lost in reality. The force of presumptive and circumstantial evidence cannot be tolerably ascertained without dwelling upon all its minutest details. To attempt to group and to combine is here to exchange argument for eloquence; it is to lose the

value and characteristics of a didactic work for one of merely desultory reading and transient amusement.

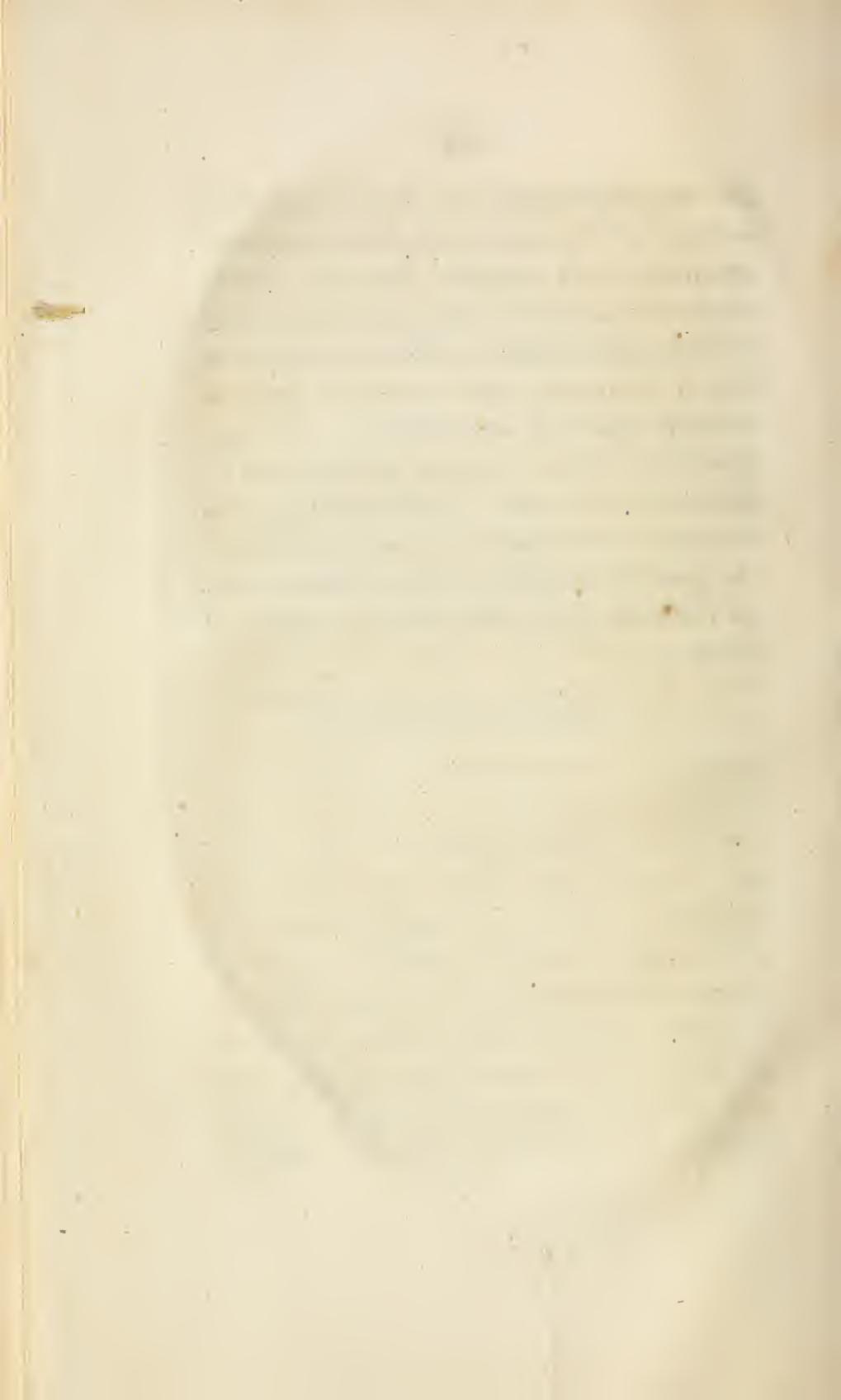
In the Notes will be found a copious collection of illustrations and authorities to support the general reasonings which are here advanced, and in which the reader is referred for farther information to writers of the greatest eminence in literature and theology. The author deems it, however, proper to observe, that in far the greater number of instances, the reasonings had passed through his own mind previously to any direct research into the opinions of others. They are to be regarded rather as separate and independent confirmations of such opinions than as the same thoughts transcribed into different language. In a few instances, he has looked in vain for any authority to support his reasonings, and here they must be left to stand or fall by their own merits. But so generally has he found these speculations confirmed by the opinions of some previous writer of ability, that he cannot but feel some confidence in their connection with truth and nature;

and he is persuaded, that if they are investigated with due attention and impartiality, they will lead the mind into that tone of thinking which may dispose it for the reception of the most important enquiries.

At the conclusion of these introductory observations, the author would again beg leave to express his high obligation to the works of Doctor Reid ; and would earnestly recommend them to all who feel any interest in connecting the evidences and doctrines of Revelation with the inductive philosophy of the human mind. Nor should the writings of his illustrious pupil, Professor Stewart, be passed over in silence, who has taught all the Graces to sacrifice at the shrine of abstract science. To these obligations he would beg leave to join his acknowledgements to the celebrated Analogy of Bishop Butler, a work which, however deficient in philosophical arrangement, is replete with the most profound and original observations on the faculties and situation of man when viewed in connection with the doctrines of Natural

and Revealed Religion. But, to study the writings of this eminent prelate to the best advantage, it is requisite that the student should be previously initiated in the school of those distinguished authors, who have at length introduced light and order into the ancient chaos of metaphysics. Amongst these, as it was the wish of Reynolds to pronounce the name of Michael Angelo as the prince and pattern of painters, so it is the grateful ambition of the present writer to conclude his preface with the name of Reid.

[See Notes and Illustrations.]



THE CONNECTION
OF
NATURAL AND REVEALED
THEOLOGY.

PART THE FIRST.

THE CREDIBILITY OF REVELATION IN GENERAL..

SECTION I.

*Is not a Divine Revelation possible ?**

THAT God *can* communicate his will in any manner which he deems most advantageous to mankind, must be admitted by all who acknowledge his existence as a wise, independent, and Almighty Intelligence. The Creator of our faculties *can* impart know-

* See Part II, Sect. 1.

ledge to us in any way which appears most proper and desirable to himself. This is a proposition so plain and obvious, that it may be said to be intuitively evident.

And that the supposition of a Revelation is not merely an *abstract* possibility, but a conception which has frequently occurred to the human mind, is plain, from the numerous pretences which have been made in the different ages of the world, to a direct communication with Heaven. Had there been any thing absurd, or even very remote, in the supposition of its possibility, it would not have been professed by impostors in religion, nor by legislators, to conciliate obedience to their authority. There would have been no success to have been hoped from claims which were altogether repugnant to reason, and which had no connection with the principles of the human mind.

But if we have this perception of the *possibility* of a Revelation, it will follow that we are capable of receiving proofs of its reality, that upon an inferior degree of evidence we ought to allow of its probability, and that upon a higher degree of

evidence we ought to allow of its certainty. For whatever supposition we can apprehend as *possible*, *i. e.* which does not involve a contradiction, or exceed the range of our understandings, may be laid before us with such evidence as ought to command our assent. There are some propositions of which we can form no opinion beyond that of their *necessary* truth; such as the Eternity of the First Cause, and the incommunicable attributes of God. These lie beyond the limits of our understandings, we are therefore impressed with the belief of their necessary existence. But whatever appears to us to be possible, may be shown, by proper and adequate evidence, to be either probable or certain; and, according to our convictions of the evidence, we shall lie under an obligation to proportion our assent.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 1.]

SECTION II.

Is not a Divine Revelation desirable?

THE possibility of a Revelation being granted, it is our next enquiry whether it be *important* and *desirable* that it should be true; for it would be a strong presumption against its probability, if we could discover nothing to recommend it in this respect, to the hopes and wants and wishes of the human mind.

But that it is *desirable* a weak, frail, and fallible creature, like man, should be taught and instructed by the All-wise and Almighty Creator, and that some communications should subsist between God and our rational faculties,—this is as plain a truth as any which can be laid before the human understanding. “ Since no one pretends,” as Paley remarks, “ that even under the Christian Revelation we have too much light, or any degree of assurance which is superfluous,” it must be admitted, whether we believe in a Revelation or no, that

it would be highly *beneficial* and *advantageous* to mankind, if some communications of this kind should take place between heaven and earth. This sentiment, if it were not self-apparent, might be supported by many appeals to the expressed wishes of the ancient philosophers.

But when it is considered that the whole constitution of human nature is the workmanship of a wise and benevolent mind, it deserves our reflection, whether this *extreme desirableness* of supernatural assistance may not, in some degree, import its *probability*; at least, whether upon the acknowledged principles of rational theism, we ought not afterwards to be disposed to listen to any evidence which might be offered in its favour. It is from intimations of a similar kind in nature, that we are often led to form our opinions concerning final causes; particularly concerning the ends and objects of our own faculties. Thus in natural theology we argue from many of the contrivances of nature, to the end and purpose for which they were designed. If then we apply the same reason-

ing to the principles of the human mind, we may, perhaps, be inclined to think, that this universal sense of our weakness, together with our natural trust on the power and goodness of God, is no slight intimation in favour of a Divine Revelation ; at least that it adds *something* to the previous conception of its possibility.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 2.]

SECTION III.

*Is not the teachable Nature of Man a presumptive Evidence of a Divine Revelation? **

If it could be shown that the human mind was furnished with a great variety of *innate* ideas, and that every individual came into the world with a stock of ready-furnished materials for thinking, then there would exist a considerable presumption against the notion of a Divine Revelation, from the make and constitution of our minds. It might then be argued, that God had made ample provision for each of us, in the suggestions of our own faculties; that as we learnt nothing from each other, but depended exclusively on our own resources, so it was not *probable* that we should derive our religious information from any other medium than that of our own breasts. Upon such an hypothesis, an *external* Revelation would not correspond with the fa-

* See Part II. Sect. 3.

culties of man, or with the general appearances of nature.

But, upon the contrary, if it be a plain and acknowledged fact, that we derive nearly all our information from others, and that the greatest talents and capacities would lie dormant and inactive, unless called into exercise by *communicated* knowledge, then it should not be accounted as improbable, that our knowledge of things divine may originally have arisen from *external* instruction. There would be a foundation for such an opinion in the frame and constitution of our minds, and the entire system of human knowledge would form an illustration of the *style* and *manner* in which such a Revelation might possibly have been given. But since a Revelation, unless it were repeated to each individual, (which would destroy and annihilate the course of nature,) must be afterwards supported by the evidence of *testimony*, it is a still further confirmation of the foregoing argument, to find we are so constituted, that we are naturally disposed to rely on evidence of this description. There is a principle of belief inherent in our nature, inde-

pendent and prior to all experience, by which children are disposed to pay an unlimited assent to what is told them by others. And though we learn in after-life to limit our belief, and to proportion our assent to evidence, yet the *principle* itself remains still inherent in our breasts ; and if any man were entirely devoid of it, he could not continue to live and act in the world. His scepticism would first exile him from society, and would afterwards starve him out of nature.

Now, it is on the same principle of belief in *testimony*, that a written Revelation must depend ; and if we had not been furnished originally with this disposition of mind, we should have been incapable of estimating its claims to our regard. But since we have been furnished with this principle, it betokens our fitness and ability to enquire into a Revelation of this description ; and when it is connected with our instinctive confidence in the Divine veracity, it ought, perhaps, to be viewed as a *still further* presumption in favour of its probability.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 3.]

SECTION IV.

*Upon what kind of Evidence must a Divine Revelation depend? **

THERE seem but two methods by which any revelation could be accomplished. The one is by a change in our *internal* faculties, the other by a change in the laws of *external* nature. Had the first been adopted, a miracle would have been worked, though we might not have been conscious of it. It would indeed have been a miracle of a far more violent kind, than any with which we are now acquainted; being a direct interference with the state of our moral and intellectual powers. Whether such a miracle might not have been performed, if it had pleased God, it does not become us positively to determine. But we may be allowed to say, that it appears to be hardly consistent with moral wisdom, and would be at utter variance with all our experience of God's providential dealings with his creatures.

* See Part II. Sect. 4.

The other method is by addressing our *natural* senses in an extraordinary manner, so as to convince the spectator that the same power which had originally ordained the laws of nature, was now exerted to exceed or to suspend their operations for a particular purpose, connected with our religious and moral welfare. As far as we can judge, this is the *only* sufficient external evidence by which such a revelation could be authenticated. Unless, then, we are prepared to deny what has been already admitted, *viz.* the *possibility* of any Revelation, it does not appear reasonable to object to the *only* method by which the knowledge of such Revelation could be conveyed to intelligent beings, without interfering with the constitution of their minds.

Yet it would be necessary, I apprehend, that this miraculous evidence should be exerted in unison with those principles of wisdom and holiness, which we are irresistibly impelled to ascribe to the Divine character; and without which, even miracles would fail to persuade us of the reality of a Divine Revelation. For we are so consti-

tuted, that we could not believe in any Revelation which contradicted the fundamental principles of piety and virtue, or which was not fitted to advance the dignity and happiness of mankind.

From these observations it will appear, that though miracles be the grand and distinguishing evidence on which a Divine Revelation must be reared ; yet, that various degrees of credibility will arise in its favour, from its connection with our moral and intellectual powers, and from its congeniality with the sentiments of reason. To suppose a total absence of this kind of evidence, would be to destroy all our capability of enquiring into its truth ; whereas, upon the contrary, to develope and illustrate its association with our moral faculties and with the government of the world, is, if not to demonstrate its truth as a matter of *historical* fact, yet to point out its probability as a matter of *abstract speculation*.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 4.]

SECTION V.

*Upon the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be adapted to Human Life, as a state of Trial and Discipline ? **

ALTHOUGH the very name of a *Revelation* implies the discovery of some important facts which could not have been ascertained by the natural powers of the mind, and the evidence of miracles appears to be essentially requisite to convince us of its truth ; yet as such *Revelation* proceeds immediately from the Author of our nature, and is addressed to rational and intelligent creatures, it might be reasonably expected that *upon the whole* it would tally and agree with the circumstances of mankind, rather than disappoint or contradict the *natural* sentiments of their understandings.

The reasonableness of this supposition would be apparent, even though we were to confine our observations to those parti-

* See Part II. Sect. 5.

cular phenomena which, at the first view, might seem to contradict it. The evidence of miracles is strictly *natural*, being precisely the same evidence as that which we daily receive through the medium of our senses. If we were to witness a miracle, we should witness it with the very same faculties as though it had happened in the ordinary course of nature. But when this miraculous fact has become matter of history, the force of this observation becomes still more apparent; for its truth will then depend precisely upon the same kind of evidence as that of any other historical fact. The same principle of belief which inclines us to give credit to *common* facts, when reported to us upon good and sufficient testimony, will also dispose us to give the same credit to these *miraculous* facts, when supported by testimony sufficient to uphold them.

The probability of this connection between revealed and natural truth will still further appear, if we consider, that unless the discoveries of Revelation approved themselves to our rational faculties, we

could not be in a situation to apply them to our practical advantage. They would neither cheer us in adversity, nor moderate us in prosperity. They would not be accommodated to our hopes, our wants, or our wishes; and, consequently, however we might be persuaded of their *speculative* truth, we could not apply them to any purposes of *practical* utility.

And since we are so powerfully affected by the circumstances in which we are placed, and external nature has so vast an influence on our minds, it would appear probable that this Revelation should, in many respects, be carried on in connection with the ordinary course of society; that what we learn in the usual course of Providence should in some respects resemble this higher and more spiritual constitution; and that our duties, and happiness, and education, as men, should be associated with an advancement and progress in this religious dispensation.

Still further to heighten these probabilities, it should be remembered, that the Author of Nature and of Revelation is the

same ; and that, in the works of the same Author, we may naturally look for traits of likeness and resemblance ; that man is addressed under both dispensations ; that they are carried on in the same world, being co-existent both in point of time and place ; and that the same faculties must necessarily be employed in judging of the evidences, and in making use of the advantages, of natural and of revealed theology.

There is one observation, however, which it is of great importance to remember, because it will furnish us with a clue to the whole presumptive character of such a dispensation. It is this, that this supposed Revelation would, in all probability, be adapted to that *state of trial* and *moral discipline* in which we are placed by nature, and under which we are contemplated by natural religion. Since we come into the world with passions which we are obliged to restrain, and since we are surrounded with temptations which we are obliged to withstand, even for our *temporal* happiness and security, there is every presumptive reason to think, that, if any extraordinary

assistance in religion were afforded to man, it would be calculated to meet those peculiar exigences which arise out of such a state of moral trial and probation.

In proportion then as the example of its Author, the tenor of its doctrines, and the tendency of its threatenings and rewards, were adapted to this state of suffering and trial, in that same proportion would it correspond with the meridian of human life, and with the natural suggestions of the human mind. Every motive with which it furnished us to mortify and subdue our corrupt propensities, and to enable our reason to control our passions ; every doctrine which it inculcated to humble our base, and to elevate our better inclinations, ought to be esteemed an indication of its universal connection with natural theology. Since nothing which is great, excellent, and noble can be obtained in this life, without much labour and solicitude, there would be every reason to apprehend that a Revelation would also encourage the same habits of sobriety and self-denial, of patient and persevering diligence ; and since human virtues are

matured and elicited rather by struggles and adversities than by ease and enjoyment, we might naturally anticipate that something of the same character and disposition would be found to pervade this extraordinary dispensation.

From such considerations we might deduce, with the utmost probability, that if any Divine Revelation were afforded, it would, in many respects, agree with the constitution of nature, and correspond with the natural suggestions of our minds. And though it might not be possible to determine beforehand as to the precise nature and extent of this connection, yet, I think, the following rule might be safely laid down concerning it : “ That in proportion as this connection subsisted between things revealed and things natural, not only would this Revelation become more credible in itself, but that it would be more adapted to the circumstances of human life, and consequently more intimately associated with the springs of human happiness and virtue.”

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 5.]

SECTION VI.

*Is it not credible that a Revelation was given to Man at his first Creation?**

UPON the first creation of any intelligent beings, it appears to be highly probable, if not morally certain, that God would communicate his will to them in some direct and extraordinary manner. The circumstances of a *first* creation seem to suppose and require such supernatural aid and advice. Since creatures in this situation would have no experience to guide them, it is every way probable to believe that their Creator would become their instructor; and more especially if they were placed in a state of *trial and probation*, that He would give them such cautionary assistance as might put them sufficiently on their guard. If they were created capable of religious worship, it appears also highly credible that He would instruct them concerning the *manner* of discharging these solemn duties. These are observations so identified with

* See Part II. Sect. 6.

reason, and so consonant to our conceptions of the divine character, that no reflecting theist can consistently question their probable truth.

Since the only objection which can be reasonably urged against a Divine Revelation, arises out of its supposed interference with some *previously* established course of nature, it does not appear how such an objection can be urged, prior to any course of nature being actually experienced. Unless we suppose the world to have been eternal, and the succession of creatures to have been infinite, we must at last mount up to *some* period when, what we now call the course of nature, could not have been known. At such a beginning of the world, this objection against a Revelation arising out of its miraculous nature could not be advanced. A miracle, according to our conceptions, is a departure from those laws of nature which are known to us only by experience.

To these deductions of reason, we may conjoin the corresponding traditions of history. It was the universal belief of the Pagan world, that the *first* religion was pre-

scribed immediately by God. The pretences of the ancient oracles are also a considerable confirmation of this fact ; for, if there had been no reality of this kind, they could scarcely have gained that credit which so long outlived their deserts. A counterfeit always supposes the previous existence of real coin.

And here I would beg leave to observe, that the Mosaic account of the creation of man, as proceeding from a single pair of human beings, has been strikingly illustrated by the late accurate researches of Mr. Malthus into the principle of population. It has now been clearly established, that the increase of mankind proceeds in something like a geometrical ratio ; that countries, under favourable circumstances, have been known to double their population within fifteen years, and that, consequently, there is nothing at all incredible in the statement of Scripture, that the whole race of mankind have proceeded from a single pair of progenitors.

Although this was a fact which, from its peculiar nature, could not have been pre-

cisely ascertained by human reason, yet, when it has been made known to us, it appears to harmonise with our sentiments of propriety and of moral fitness. It appears to be far more adapted to the circumstances of our world, that the human race should have proceeded from a single pair, and that their numbers should have gradually augmented, than that superfluous multitudes should have been at once created. There is in this hypothesis a manifest reference to the *existing* course of nature, which tends towards a gradual increase of numbers, and to the acknowledged condition of mankind, as being capable of propagating their own species. Besides, if the world had been well peopled at its first creation, there would have been no scope afforded for that improveableness of reason which forms such a leading characteristic of our species, and which is so intimately connected with the acquirement and division of property. Indeed, if we are to believe the accounts of antiquity, whether sacred or profane, respecting the age of the first generations of mankind, it would have been almost *im-*

possible for such a state of society to have subsisted ; whereas, upon the representations of Scripture, this protracted length of human life served only to accelerate the multiplication of the species, and the consequent cultivation of the earth.

The origin of language also (if it be allowed to be of divine construction) is of no inconsiderable force, as showing the probability of a Divine Revelation ; for it is hardly conceivable that language should have been given by God without an application to its most important purpose, that of using it in the service of religion, and for the praise and worship of its Author.

To these probabilities we may add the well-known traces of resemblance and inter-community which pervaded the most ancient forms of religion, and which multiply in proportion as we go back into antiquity, and approach to the cradle of mankind. Thus tradition and reason combine in establishing the probability of a *first* Revelation, to deny which appears to be akin to denying the providence of God ; for if his paternal care did not extend to the *first*

ancestors of mankind, how can we be persuaded to think that He *now* superintends the course and constitution of nature?

Without such a Revelation, how could any just or certain opinions be entertained respecting the origin of man, or the formation of the world by the will and power of God? It was *impossible* that a creature should become acquainted with his own origin, otherwise than by the instruction of his Creator; a power superior to that of man was required to give him this important information. Till this point was ascertained upon indubitable authority, reason had no data whereon to erect her deductions; philosophy was tormented with doubts which could not be overcome, and history commenced with hypothesis, and ended in uncertainty.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 6.]

SECTION VII.

*Would God have created Man otherwise than
Innocent ?**

UPON the supposition that man was created in his *present* condition, we charge the Deity with being the *immediate* author of all that sin and misery which we feel and witness. But how repugnant this supposition is to all the principles of reason, and how subversive of all the foundations of natural theology, need not be shown by argument,—it is matter of plain self-evident conviction. No doubt, in the wide and varied gradations of intellect, there might be a place found for beings of no higher mental stature and ability than man. It is not from the meanness of his understanding, (which even *now* is vastly superior to his situation,) but from his *moral* depravity, that we argue he would not possibly have come out of the hands of his Maker in his

* See Part II. Sect. 7.

present circumstances. It is one thing to create a being with few and limited faculties, and another to make him prone to evil, and disinclined from all that is good. The former act would reflect no kind of *moral* imputation on the character of the Deity; it is but supposing him to set a limit to the operations of his power. But the latter would be introducing moral evil, by *necessity*, into creation. It would be ascribing to God that which it is impossible he should directly cause, viz. the existence of beings originally evil, and who were made by Him, not by themselves, for the purposes of vice, and misery, and mischief.

This being plainly repugnant to reason, we are obliged to ascribe the moral evil, which we find in creation, to some misfortune and accident which *subsequently* took place. How this disaster arose, it does not appear that reason could accurately determine. There seems a general tendency, however, in the fabulous traditions of antiquity, to ascribe it to the agency of some evil beings superior to man; nor would it be easy, perhaps, to offer any hy-

pothesis which is, upon the whole, more consonant to reason, or more adequate to explain the phænomena we witness.

Query. Does not this supposition of our original innocence derive some credibility from our *inherent* love of the fair and excellent, which formed such a distinguishing feature in the moral systems of antiquity?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 7.]



SECTION VIII.

*Does not the Possibility of Man's Fall from Innocence, arise out of his Free Agency?**

WHEN Revelation is objected to on account of its asserting the fall of man from a state of innocence, it is natural to enquire whence this catastrophe arose. Now, according to Scripture, it arose out of the *abuse* of man's free agency. Whether we receive these accounts as a literal or a figurative representation of the truth, we must admit that he is there considered as free to stand, or free to fall, according to the use which he chose to make of his moral and intellectual faculties.

But if he were a *free agent* how could this have been prevented, but by impairing or destroying his *liberty* of choice and action? It is essential to every being that is its own regulator, to choose its own course of action. The whole question, therefore,

* See Part II. Sect. 8.

may be resolved into this single question : “ Could the wisdom or the goodness of the Creator have been displayed in any manner so powerfully, as by the creation of free and responsible beings ? ”

To this question the answer is plain and obvious. The finest machinery is nothing compared to such a creation, because it is not a theme for the display of *moral* attributes. The highest notions which we can form of the Supreme consists in viewing Him as the rewarder of virtue and the punisher of vice. It is not happiness alone which is the object of moral government, but happiness only as it is connected with virtue. It is not power alone which is exhibited in creation, but power in sub servience to moral wisdom. But for the exhibition of *such* attributes, it was necessary that free and responsible beings should be introduced into nature.

It may be asked, perhaps, did not God foresee this abuse of man’s free agency ? We grant it ; but was this to prevent him from creating man ? If so, why does he not now interfere to prevent all abuse of our na-

tional and physical powers? The objection must be frivolous, when urged against the doctrines of *Revelation*, because it will not hold good when applied to the government of *nature*.

It is the obvious intention of Providence that we should be furnished with various powers, the use of which is left, in a great measure, at our own disposal. There is no capacity in our nature which may not be turned into the source of misery and vice. Health and strength, the talents of mind and body, with all the enjoyments of fortune, are *capable* of being perverted into the occasions of ruin and wretchedness. Why then should an objection be urged against *Revelation*, which may be equally brought against the whole of our *natural* and *moral* experience?

Since it is not possible to conceive that any free agent, short of absolute perfection, may not mis-employ his powers, this objection, if pushed to its full extent, will lead us to the conclusion, that no free agent whatever should be created. But the universe without free agency would be

but a mighty machine. It would be a display of merely *physical* force ; it would afford no exercise for these *moral* attributes, which are so infinitely superior in grandeur and dignity to all other excellence.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 8.]

SECTION IX.

*Does not the Struggle which subsists in our Nature between Reason and Passion, intimate some Derangement in our moral Faculties ? **

EVERY man is conscious that he has a notion of *duty* inherent in his nature ; that is, he feels an obligation to follow his *reason* rather than his *passions*. If this principle of duty were able to hold the *chief* command, then, I think, it might be pronounced in its natural and rightful station ; but though we retain the perception of its legitimate and essential superiority, yet by some strange anomaly, we generally yield our obedience to what we know to be secondary and inferior. Thus *force* becomes superior to *law*, and we live from day to day under the worst species of domestic tyranny.

Now this anomaly can hardly be accounted for without supposing some *unnatural*

* See Part II. Sect. 8.

tural derangement in our moral constitutions. If our passions acted only a *subordinate* part, they would be extremely useful, perhaps essentially necessary to our present existence. Or if their subjection were attended with only a certain degree of *difficulty*, it might be explained from our having been placed in a state of trial and of moral probation. But when this difficulty has arisen to such a height as to render us almost incapable of restraining their violence, then it would appear as if our *nature itself* had suffered some violent convulsion. It looks like the *involuntary* motions of a paralytic; the will does not act in unison with the understanding, and the conscience protests against the illegality of that force which is paramount to reason.

But besides this singular phænomenon, we may observe, that we are capable of entertaining sentiments of *remorse*, and *self-condemnation*, and of *penitential sorrow*. Now these are feelings which seem plainly to indicate a kind of *derangement* in our moral constitutions. Would it have been possible for a creature to *repent* of

being in that situation in which God had originally placed him? Could the pangs of *remorse* and *penitential sorrow*, have found any place in the breast of an unspoilt and innocent being?

There is one observation, which of itself might powerfully intimate, that mankind was at present in a degraded and unnatural situation—*the universal prevalence of polytheism and idolatry amongst heathen nations*, in opposition to the best dictates of reason and nature. Can any *theist* believe, that God would have originally created mankind with such dubious opinions respecting the *divine unity*?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 9.]

SECTION X.

*Does not the Supposition of our Fall from Innocence, derive some Credibility from the Contradictions which subsist between the Wishes and the Circumstances of Mankind? **

“ THE greatness and the misery of man,” says Pascal, “ being alike conspicuous, it is necessary the true religion should declare that he contains within himself some noble principle of greatness, and at the same time some profound source of misery. For the true religion cannot answer its character otherwise than by searching our nature to the bottom, so as perfectly to explain all that is great, and all that is miserable in it; together with the reason of the one and of the other.”

If we apply this striking observation to those feelings of *contempt* and *dissatisfaction* which wise and virtuous men have so generally expressed for the enjoyments of

* See Part II. Sect. 8.

the present life, we shall find that these contradictions can hardly be satisfactorily accounted for, without recurring to the hypothesis of our *fall* from a state of some higher dignity. It is very improbable that sentiments of this kind could have been felt by creatures who had continued in the state wherein they were *originally* placed by God. It would be subversive of our notions of equity to believe that Almighty wisdom would have originally created such an inequality between the wishes and the circumstances of mankind.

Let those who are conversant with the speculations of the ancient moralists, especially with those of Epictetus, Seneca, and Antoninus, say, whether this observation is not verified by almost every page of their writings. We are shocked to find that the reflections of such eminent men should have led them only to an acquaintance with their misery, and that in proportion to the dignity and elevation of their minds, should have been their *contempt* for the enjoyments of the present world. Such *contradictions* almost necessarily imply, that we are in a

degraded and *unnatural* situation. Hence the same arguments which prove the immortality of the soul, may also, with equal propriety, be used to evince the probability of our fall from primeval innocence; for it is inconsistent with our opinions of the moral attributes of the Supreme, to think that he would have created intelligent beings *dissatisfied* and *discontented* with their lot in the universe.

Query. Was it not from observing these *contradictions*, that so many of the ancients believed in the *pre-existence* of souls?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 10.]

SECTION XI.

*Is not the same Supposition rendered credible from the numerous external Ills to which we are exposed ? **

If our world exhibited only marks of a state of trial and difficulty, there would be no reason whatever for supposing it to be out of its natural and original condition. It is a perfectly supposeable case that innocent and upright beings might be placed in such a situation for the improvement of their virtues, without any guilt on their own part, or any displeasure on the part of their Creator. But besides these marks of *trial* in creation, there are plain and manifest traces of *punitive justice*, or, as some would state it, of *vindictive wrath*.

When a child comes into the world with an incurable distemper, or when thousands are prematurely swept away by plagues and famines, by the earthquake or the sword, it is rather too much to assert

* See Part II. Sect. 8.

that all these evils betoken nothing more than a state of mere trial and difficulty. They are the strongest proofs which can be given that we are treated as *sinners*, that we came into the world with the marks of *sin* upon our foreheads. It would be subversive of all our conceptions of the Divine justice and goodness to believe that such could have been the treatment of *innocent* and *unoffending* creatures.

Though it would be folly and presumption to assert that God was in any degree obliged to endue all his creatures with unlimited happiness, and thus to make every world a system of optimism, yet it does not appear reconcileable to our sentiments either of his wisdom or justice, to believe that he would *create* any beings in a state of *positive suffering* and *misery*. It is far more reasonable to conclude, that when any beings are found in this state, it has arisen from some accident *subsequent* to their creation, and that it has been brought upon themselves by *their own* misconduct.

It may also be remarked, that the kind of religious worship which man is *naturally*

disposed to pay to God, is not the worship of a being who could simply rely upon the *love* and *favour* of his Maker. Those prayers and supplications for mercy, those confessions of sin, those sacrifices and atonements which have more or less constituted the worship of all the nations of the earth, are so many symptoms of the *loss* of our original rectitude. They are strong, though involuntary, confessions, that man feels himself out of his *proper* element, and that he is conscious of having violated the *original* charter of his nature.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 11.]

SECTION XII.

*Are not the hereditary Consequences of the Fall in unison with our common Observations of Nature? **

IT is usual to object to the doctrine of the Fall as it is stated in Scripture, on account of its supposed effects being derived in an *hereditary* manner throughout the whole species. If this were a *singular* and *uncommon* phænomenon, there might be some force in the objection; because our experience under the ordinary course of Providence would then be at variance with the discoveries of Revelation: but if we are treated by Nature in the same manner, then it is an objection not peculiar to Christianity, but directed against the whole course and constitution of God's moral government.

Now, first, it should be remarked that the health and happiness of children are

* See Part II. Sect. 8.

left in a great measure to depend on the behaviour and conduct of their parents. Long before a child comes into the world, his happiness or misery may be anticipated to a high degree of probability, from their situation and character in society. Thus, the children of those who are habitually profligate and imprudent have very little chance of becoming useful and respectable; whereas the offspring of the honest and industrious have every opportunity of improvement and advantage afforded them. The same observations will also apply to great bodies of men, to whole kingdoms and nations, the prosperity or downfall of which is often left dependent on the virtues or vices of a *single individual* who is placed at their head. You may trace marks of the same constitution in the animal and vegetable worlds, in which excellence or degeneracy descends for the most part in *hereditary* succession. It is a principle adopted also into the codes of human legislation, where *taint of blood*, as in the crime of treason, affects children who are yet unborn. The same observation will apply

generally to our sentiments of honour or infamy, which affect not only those who have honourably or dishonourably distinguished themselves, but which are transferred to the *descendants* and *families* of such individuals. Thus the child of an infamous parent comes into the world with a stain upon his forehead ; he suffers a degree of infamy on his parent's account ; and must have more than a common share of virtue to wipe off the imputation and reproach.

The truth, however, is, that this is an objection to the constitution of mankind as forming a *race*, as consisting of members of one family, and being capable of continuing their own species. For it appears to be essential to the nature of a *race* that its members should be mutually *affected* by each other's vices and virtues. They are not separate and distinct individuals, but branches springing out of one common stock. Thus they are connected by various ties of relationship, and are influenced throughout the whole of their lives by the situations in which they stand towards each other.

But the extreme partiality and narrowness of this objection is evident from the consideration, that we should never have heard a syllable uttered against the wisdom or justice of this hereditary principle, had the result of the trial of our first parents terminated in our *favour*. If we had inherited happiness on account of their integrity, we should have admired the equity of the procedure, just as some men are willing to believe in the doctrine of eternal rewards, but can give no credence to that of eternal punishments. The child of a provident parent never dreams of finding fault with that constitution of things by which the good effects of a father's virtues descend upon his offspring. But because the result has turned out *against* us, are we at liberty to censure the *general principle*? And is it not plain that an objection to the *exemplification of the principle* in the consequences of the Fall, must be false and unfounded, when we find the *same principle* diffused and operating in every part of nature?

It should be considered, indeed, how far it is reasonable and philosophical to object

to any doctrine as stated by Revelation, which is consistent with our actual experience, and which is able to account for the phænomena of the moral world. The probable truth of such a doctrine should always be sufficient to silence the merely speculative difficulties which may attend its acknowledgment. Thus, if it be an undoubted fact that the errors, faults, and imperfections of human nature are propagated from father to son, I know not why any man should object to the statement of the Scriptures — that these evils and mischiefs would not have been felt if our first parents had continued in their integrity. The chief difficulty lies in imagining how such moral qualities can be *propagated*; but this difficulty, whether it be greater or less, must be overcome, because it is a *fact* with which we are all acquainted. All that is peculiar to Revelation, tends rather to *diminish* the difficulty than to *increase* it, inasmuch as it attributes these maladies not to the *original* formation of man, but to the *subsequent* abuse of his faculties.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 12.]

SECTION XIII.

*Is it not probable there are other intelligent
Creatures in the Universe besides Man?*

WE are assured by Revelation that there are *different* orders of created beings, spirits of a higher rank and dignity than man, of whom some are good and excellent, others rebellious and depraved. There is no hint, however, given us that any creature was made *originally* evil, but that he became corrupt by a *voluntary* abuse of his natural and moral powers.

Now this account of Revelation appears to be strictly consonant to reason, for it seems by no means probable that man is the *only* intelligent creature in the universe. He is apparently too *low* in the scale of intellect to hold the *highest* department in creation. This probability is still further heightened by the discoveries of modern astronomy, which opens

to us worlds moving under the same laws as our earth, and in all likelihood peopled with millions of inhabitants.

But if there are *different* orders of intelligent beings, it is more probable that *some* are evil and *some* are good, than that *all* should be precisely of the same moral character. This probability arises out of the nature of *free agency*, which is always liable to perversion and abuse. Symptoms of the same variety being discoverable in *our* little course of nature, it should not surprise us to learn that it extends to the *other* quarters of creation.

The force and reality of these probabilities may be in some degree estimated from the *universality* of these opinions amongst all nations, whether savage or civilized; nor does it at all affect the argument, whether this belief arose from early tradition, or from its congeniality with the sentiments of reason. If it arose from tradition, then it must be admitted as *true*; if from reason, then it must be admitted as *probable*.

The *fact* itself is placed beyond dispute; we leave it to every man to form his own opinions respecting the *cause*.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 13.]

SECTION XIV.

Is it not credible that some Evil Spirits might have tempted Man to disobey his Maker?

FROM what we observe in the *present* world, we may learn that superiority of *talent* is by no means invariably allied to *moral* excellence, but that its influence is frequently applied to *seduce* and *outreason* those of inferior abilities. If then we are informed, that the fall of our first parents was in some measure brought about by the contrivances and machinations of evil beings of a higher rank and dignity than man, there is nothing in this intelligence which can at all shock our conceptions of what is *probable*. Does it not seem to *agree* with what is daily passing around us? Do not we frequently behold those of greater talents *alluring* others into guilt and error?

If it be objected that the temptation would on this supposition be too strong to

be resisted, we reply that this *insuperable* force is by no means implied in the representations of Scripture. On the contrary, man is there described as feeling himself *morally* guilty because he had *wilfully* transgressed a known command. Now, if he were induced to do this by the superior sophistry of the tempter, he acted precisely like those who are now overcome by the temptations and allurements of others ; and he was guilty upon the same account, that we should now reckon any individual to be culpable, who listened to such evil suggestions, though he might be far inferior in talent.

If it be again objected, that the consequences of a *single* crime are here represented as excessive, it should be remembered, that it is not possible for us to ascertain what might be consequences of a *first* departure from right, and thus of introducing sin into a nature which was before sinless. It appears, however, probable that such consequences would be extremely awful and tremendous, and would, in some degree, produce a *natural* and *necessary*

change in our whole moral treatment. A state of *penitence* must be widely different from a state of *innocence*.

Still we grant there would be something to be *hoped* under this terrible calamity. If man fell by the temptations of a superior being, though he *participated* in the crime, the *greater* share of guilt belonged to him who was the author and cause of his ruin. To regain his dignity he must be brought into a state of trial, and discipline, and penitential sorrow; his virtues must henceforth spring from *unfeigned humility*; and from *humble hope* on the Divine Mercy. *The marks* of this change are now to be looked for in the external world, and in the convictions of the human mind. To both of these we appeal for credible evidence in support of our reasoning.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 14.]

SECTION XV.

Is it not probable that Man upon his first Creation might be allowed to hold converse with beings different from himself?

MUCH absurd ridicule has sometimes been thrown upon Scripture from its representing man in a state of innocence, as conversing with an order of beings *different* from any with which we are now acquainted. But if he were in a state of *solitude*, does it not seem probable that he would be allowed to hold converse with *other* intelligences? If there existed but a *single* pair of human beings, and these but a little lower than the angels, is it not reasonable to suppose that God would permit such creatures to visit him, and to impart some intelligence respecting the other quarters of Creation?

The whole force of the objection arises from not sufficiently considering that in this case either *no* course of nature was permanently established, or that it was

quite a *different* course from that with which we are now acquainted. It might have been *natural*, under these circumstances, that man should have held communications with angelic beings. Perhaps his rational faculties could not have been sufficiently *exercised* without some intercourse of this kind, or what is still more probable, perhaps he could not have been brought into a state of trial and probation, without such communications. Or it might have been a dispensation of *mercy* which permitted him to fall by the temptation of a superior being, rather than by a *self-suggested* motive to evil. In the one case, by dividing the guilt with another, it might have admitted of some extenuation, and thus have allowed of *pardon* upon repentance, whereas in the other, he might have been placed in the desperate situation of those rebellious spirits to whom no place for repentance is left.

Any of these suppositions appears sufficiently credible to rescue the representations of Scripture from profane ridicule and ignorant objections ; and though not pretending

to account for the *whole* of the case, it may convince us, that considered as matter of speculation, there is far more *probability* in these relations than is commonly imagined, *i. e.* they are more consistent with the suggestions of reason, and more nearly approaching to the course of an ordinary experience.

But it should also be remembered, that profane history agrees in this respect with the representations of the sacred records ; and that, whether the belief of such supernatural communications in the heroic and fabulous ages, arose from tradition or from its supposed congeniality to reason, a strong presumptive argument will hence arise to confirm the accounts of Revelation.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 15.]

SECTION XVI.

*What is the present Character and Situation
of Mankind? **

IF we contemplate man as described by moralists, or as experienced by ourselves, we shall find that he is a being partly good and partly evil, having a wonderful mixture of contending principles in his nature, exhibiting extraordinary traces, both of dignity and meanness, exalted by something which is almost divine, and yet degraded by propensities which are scarcely human.

Correspondent to these strange phenomena of his nature, is the situation in which he is placed. The world presents us with the appearance of a Paradise in ruins. Misery and happiness go hand in hand ; on one side, you behold fertility and enjoyment ; on the other, poverty and disease, the famine and the sword.

Still there is a general predominance of *hope* and of *happiness* which cheer and

* See Part II. Sect. 9.

enliven the struggles of human life; still there is a *capability* of repentance and an abstract love of virtue which bespeak grace and dignity in this astonishing creature. Amidst all his sufferings he does not appear forsaken by God; he does not wear the countenance of a being who is *utterly* exiled from mercy. As there is a sun which shines upon him even when the tempest rages, so there is a Providence which watches over him in his bitterest afflictions; which bids him look upon his *chastisements* as designed for his correction, not as *punishments* inflicted for his ruin.

How much might be done for such a creature, by acquainting him with the *cause* of his calamities, by assuring him that his repentance would not be fruitless, that his hopes of pardon were not delusive, and that mercy and forgiveness were in store, if he would accept them upon just and equitable terms.

There seems to be a *latent capacity* in our moral constitution which requires only adequate assistance to bring it to a *practical* account; some intelligence which might

illuminate our prospects of the *future*, and clear away our doubts of the *past*. Reason herself might do something towards effecting a reformation, if the *source* of our disasters were clearly known ; but she might do much more in concert with Divine assistance ; especially if any method were pointed out by which our Maker, consistently with justice, might pardon the transgressions of Man, and enable him again to enjoy the expectations of happiness.

These views of human nature are fully countenanced by the history of mankind. How noble, yet how abortive were the struggles of the ancient philosophers to find out the road to truth and virtue! They had evidently a *force* which needed direction, and *capabilities* which might have been improved into piety. Who can doubt that such men as Socrates and Aristides, or as Cicero and Seneca, might have made the highest advances in moral excellence, if their principles had been duly rectified, and if their minds had been enlightened by a more propitious course of religious education ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 16.]

SECTION XVII.

*Might not Man entertain some faint Hopes
of Pardon, on Repentance ? **

HOWEVER much the situation of man was changed by the Fall, both in regard to his internal dispositions and his external enjoyments ; still, that he was not left in utter *hopelessness* of obtaining help and pardon, is apparent from the whole constitution of the natural and moral world.

Though his mind was deranged and his passions disordered, still there was the image of God engraved upon his reason. He was both able and willing to offer up some kind of worship to the Supreme ; he had a conscience which could mourn over *past* transgressions, and which could, in some degree, warn him against *future* evils. He was not so lost to hope, but he could pray for mercy ; nor so lost to virtue, but he could feel the unworthiness of vice.

* See Part II. Sect. 10.

He was still a fit subject for expectations, for reproofs, for correction, and for reward ; and though he had forfeited his *innocence*, yet that virtue remained within his reach, which consisted in attempting to restrain his passions and to improve his heart and understanding.

That such a creature would entertain *some* hopes, mingled with many apprehensions, is plain from the nature of the case, as well as from the voice of history. When he looked around upon creation, he beheld the same traces of penitential punishment softened by mercy. Though condemned to toil and labour, he had some mitigations of misery ; his patience and industry could avail, in some degree, to improve his situation. Though exposed to pains and sickness, yet he found various remedies provided in nature, and the tendency to heal (*vis medicatrix naturæ*) inherent in his body. By his own fortitude and perseverance, or by the help and assistance of others, he could do much towards rendering his *external* situation more comfortable ; whilst by habits of self-restraint and self-

government, he could attain to a considerable portion of *mental* ease and tranquillity.

“ Of a disposition in God,” says Barrow, “ to remit offences, that all men have ever had a presumption, their application to him in religious practice doth show ; for no man would address himself in service to God, without a *hope* that God is reconcileable to him, and that his service therefore may be acceptable ; particularly the general practice of offering sacrifice for the expiation of sin, and of appeasing God’s wrath, does plainly declare the same.”

Yet, on the other hand, as Dr. Price remarks, “ the consideration of ourselves as *guilty* creatures would raise doubts in our minds, and these doubts would not be lessened, but increased, by reflecting, that under the Divine government, happiness is connected with virtue, and punishment with vice. The fact that virtue shall be rewarded, does not by any means determine what such virtue as *ours* may expect. The virtuous amongst mankind are to be considered as *penitent sinners*, and what peculiar treatment the cases of such may

require, or how far repentance may avail to break the connection between sin and misery, would not, I think, be clear to us."

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 17.]

SECTION XVIII.

*Does it not seem probable that some extraordinary Assistance would be granted to aid Man in his moral Difficulties ? **

FROM all that we can judge of the attributes of our Maker, by the sentiments of reason and by our experience of that love which is over all his works, it appears *natural* to conclude, if any method existed by which mankind could be rescued from destruction consistently with the Divine justice, that God would be *disposed* to extend his mercy to his fallen creatures. But whether this could be done without infringing on our moral freedom, or without trenching on the Divine holiness, it does not appear that reason could determine with sufficient confidence.

This help, however, if it came at all, must evidently come in an *extraordinary* manner. It was not by the mere exertions

* See Part II. Sect. 10.

of *reason* that man could hope to regain the ground which he had lost. Upon the supposition that he had fallen from his native innocence, he had become *incapable*, without Divine assistance, of making those exertions which were necessary to his restoration.

But nothing being impossible to God which does not imply a contradiction or an absurdity, why should it be thought that the redemption of the world was either beyond the power or contrary to the will of Him who had created it? Since those who have fallen into difficulties may often be helped by others in conjunction with their own endeavours, and since Nature prompts us mutually to *afford* and to *expect* this assistance, why should it be thought incredible that the universal Father might devise some scheme of mercy to aid man in his present exigencies, and to afford him a capability of working out his salvation?

For the confirmation of these abstract reasonings we might appeal to the writings of many of the ancient philosophers — particularly to the opinions of Socrates, as re-

presented by Plato. From these, it would appear that several of the more reflecting Heathens, not only acknowledged their *want* of a Divine Revelation, but even expressed their hopes that God would be pleased to grant some *further* extraordinary intimations of his will ; whilst they were generally persuaded that mankind were already indebted to a *previous* Revelation for the scanty remains of that religious knowledge which they even *then* possessed.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 18.]

SECTION XIX.

*In what Manner does it seem most probable that a Revelation would be made known? **

UPON the supposition of any Revelation, it seems scarcely possible to imagine that it should not be attended with the institution of some form of worship — and that this worship should not be adapted to the peculiar situation of mankind as *penitent sinners*, who might hope for pardon and assistance on their sincere repentance and reformation.

The first and leading feature of this form of worship would probably consist, then, in its impressing them with the distinction between a state of *innocence* and that of *penitence*. That whereas the one might secure happiness by its own *merits*, the other must be rescued by some extraordinary act of *mercy* exerted in its behalf.

Now, these being sentiments congenial to Nature, as well as enforced by Revelation, will account for the universal preva-

* See Part II. Sect. 10.

lency of a *sacrificial* form of worship amongst all the nations of the earth. Though the institution of sacrifices was divine, yet this institution was not a merely *arbitrary* appointment, but one given in unison and acting in co-operation with the principles of reason and the dictates of conscience. Mankind carry about with them the conviction of their being guilty and offending creatures, and that, if saved, they must be saved by the free mercy of God, rather than by their own merits. Hence, when sacrifices had been appointed by God, they found a ready support from the moral principles of Nature; and though their peculiar reference to a Redeemer was gradually forgotten in the Pagan world, yet they still served as “a remembrance of sin,” and reminded the worshipper of his dependence on the Divine mercy and forgiveness.

Another method by which a Revelation would, in all probability, be proposed, would be by the re-publication of the original moral code which we had before received, but our knowledge of which was now rendered so obscure by sin. For

though it would be impossible for man in his fallen situation to pay to it a full and faultless obedience, yet much might still be effected, if these duties were laid before him with plainness and perspicuity, and with the force of a *law* proceeding immediately from God. To this would probably be added a clearer view of our condition after death, and of the rewards and punishments which would *inevitably* attend upon the righteous and the wicked.

Though nothing, I think, could with certainty be anticipated as to the *particular channel* by which such a Revelation would be brought down to us; yet as the evidence of *miracles* appears to be essential to its credibility, there would perhaps arise a general probability that some heavenly messenger might be employed as its commissioner; some *superior spirit* whose rank and dignity might give weight and importance to the intelligence.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 19.]

SECTION XX.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that the Unity and Personality of God would form a leading Article of Instruction? **

ALTHOUGH it be true that the suggestions of nature, and the conclusions of reason, dispose us to acknowledge the Unity of the Divine Being, yet from the weakness and frailty of our natural powers, (to whatever cause this calamity be ascribed,) the great majority of mankind in all ages have been extremely prone to fall into the errors of idolatry and polytheism.

It may be questioned, indeed, whether this article of the Divine Unity were ever heartily believed by the bulk of any nation of antiquity besides the Jews. Whatever might have been the speculations of philosophers, the multitude was sunk in the grossest idolatry. Even many of those phi-

* See Part. II. Sect. 11 and 12.

losophers, who admitted the Unity of God, denied his providence over the world ; and thus, as Cicero remarks, what they *speculatively* allowed they *practically* denied. The strict personality of the Deity seems scarcely to have been admitted by any ; for there is a tincture of *pantheism* in their sublimest descriptions of the Divine Nature, which approaches very nearly to the modern doctrines of Spinosa.

Now, upon the supposition of any Revelation, there arises a strong presumption that this important doctrine of the Unity of God would form a principal article of instruction, and that it would be inculcated in such a *plain* and *practical* manner as to insure its reception and belief wherever this Revelation was make known. And it might be anticipated, I think, that such would be the *effect* of any testimony which God should deliver concerning himself.

Now, as it might be justly objected to any Revelation if it had not succeeded in establishing this belief of the Divine Unity, so it ought, on the other hand, to be esteemed a strong presumptive evidence in its favour,

if, through the intervention of such a supposed Revelation, the generality of mankind should have been brought to acknowledge this primary doctrine of Natural Theology.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 20.]

SECTION XXI.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, was it not probable that some new Relations would be discovered to us respecting our Connection with the Divine Being? **

SINCE the very conception of a *Revelation* includes the supposition of some doctrines not discoverable by our *natural* faculties, we may reasonably enquire whether there was not a previous probability that some of these unknown doctrines would relate immediately to our connection with the Divine Being?

That this was at least *probable*, will appear to every one who considers the great ignorance and darkness of the Pagan world respecting the Divine Nature and Perfections. If God should condescend to instruct man in the way of an extraordinary Revelation, it appears almost inconceivable that he should not give us some further information respecting *himself*. That this

* See Part II. Sect. 13.

information could not *contradict* our natural convictions concerning the Deity, we readily allow; but it might open to us certain views of his nature which could not have been *otherwise* attained. And this, it is even probable it would do, considering the general darkness and mystery which necessarily belong to this sublime subject.

There would be every reason to hope, however, that these discoveries would be made in a way suited to our faculties, not like the abstract speculations of philosophy, but blended with practical and moral truth, so that we might apprehend their *reality* and *importance*, though we could not pierce into the *manner* of their existence. This being the style in which we are ordinarily instructed in the works of Providence, where we learn to acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of God from their visible effects upon creation, it seems to be highly probable that if any new discoveries were made to us concerning the Deity, that they would be brought home to our hearts by a *similar* manifestation of favour and goodness.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 21.]

SECTION XXII.

*Is not the Deity made known to us in Natural Theology, chiefly after a relative and analogical manner? **

THE learned author of the Treatise entitled “ Things Divine and Supernatural, conceived by Analogy with Things Natural and Human,” has shown with great force of argument and variety of illustration, that all our language respecting the Divine Nature and Attributes, is to be understood as implying a certain *relation* and *correspondence* between heaven and earth, between the conceptions of our imperfect faculties and the realities of the Divine Being.

Thus, when in the language of Natural as well as of Revealed Theology, we address God as the *Creator* of all things, as our *Father*, *Governor*, and *Preserver*, we derive these conceptions, in the first place, from *terrestrial* objects, and then we apply them *analog-*

* See Part II. Sect. 14.

gically, that is, with an imperfect and yet a real relation to the Maker of heaven and earth. We borrow the sublimest notions of earthly power and grandeur, and afterwards we apply them to Him who is far above, out of our sight, yet who condescends to furnish us with these faint *similitudes* of his glory.

The same *relative* interpretation must also be understood when we speak of the *moral* attributes of the Divine Being. We cannot directly apprehend the goodness, the holiness, the mercy, or the justice of God ; but since we have some conceptions of these attributes derived from the works of creation, and from reflecting upon our own minds, we transfer these conceptions to the Divine Intellect ; and we are satisfied that they must bear some relation, however distant, to the essential attributes of the Supreme.

Now, as these remarks extend more or less to every part of Natural Theology, so are they clear and indisputable evidences of its connection with the philosophy of the human mind. They afford lucid and

satisfactory proof of the illustrations which arise from a sober survey of our faculties ; and they exhibit traces of that union and connection which may every where be discovered between the *natural* and the *moral* government of the world.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 22.]

SECTION XXIII.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be published by some Being of extraordinary Dignity? **

SINCE the noblest office which we can imagine to be held by any created being, consists in his appearing as the *herald* and *messenger* of a Divine Revelation, it seems probable that some superior and exalted Spirit would be selected for this singular purpose. Considered only as the messenger of such tidings, it would appear as if the loftiest created being would be honoured by a commission which necessarily implies a *mediation* between God and Man. But if, besides his acting as the *herald* of the intelligence, he should be called upon to *execute* the work itself, if the fulfilment of the plan should devolve upon the *powers* of the mediator, then it seems impossible for reason to determine whether any being, less than *Divine*, could undertake the duty.

* See Part II. Sect. 15—18.

There would be considerable grounds to apprehend lest an office of this sublime description could hardly be fulfilled by any *dependent* being. There appears something beyond the powers of a *secondary* agent implied in the character of a *mediator* betwixt Heaven and Earth. It looks like a *voluntary* and *independent* office, not like that of a mere instrument to deliver the message, but of a party related, and allied equally to the Creator and the creature. It seems to demand the influence of one who could sign and seal the reconciliation by his *own* name and authority.

Though we do not pretend that reason could have clearly anticipated the *necessity* for the appearance of such a wonderful character, yet there is so much of *propriety* and *fitness* in these views, that they should at least not be objected to, if realized by a particular Revelation professing to come to us through such a medium. The discovery ought not to surprise us as *improbable*, because we have no reason to conclude that any created being could be furnished with independent powers sufficiently ample

to execute the office of a *mediator* between God and Man.

Quere. Would not the influence and authority of a Revelation, be in proportion to the dignity and perfection of its immediate author?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 23.]

SECTION XXIV.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that the Example of its Founder would become a great Evidence of its Truth? **

SINCE the human mind is so powerfully influenced by *example*, it might have been reasonably expected that if any Revelation was given by God to man, a considerable part of its evidence would arise out of the moral and religious *character* of its founder. A Revelation which was deficient in this respect, would certainly excite strong prejudices against its truth; so much so, perhaps, as to countervail any direct evidence which might be offered in its support. These prejudices it should be remembered, would not be the offspring of pride or caprice, but the *natural*, nay the *virtuous* tendencies of our moral constitution.

If the *example* of the author of a Revelation were not made subservient to the

* See Part II. Sect. 19.

instruction of his followers, one great and leading motive for their virtues would be altogether lost. It may be doubted, indeed, whether, according to the acknowledged principles of human nature, the finest *precepts* of morality would have produced any lasting or general effects, which were not supported and consolidated by the *practice* and *example* of their teacher.

From such considerations we might reasonably conjecture, that, in the event of any Revelation being given to man, the *life* and *example* of its founder would afford a striking mark of its truth, and that much of its practical utility would operate through this channel of instruction. When we consider indeed the eminence, authority, and influence which any teacher coming from God would possess over the minds of his followers, I am inclined to think, that we should state this argument, not as a *presumptive* mark of a Revelation, but as a *necessary criterion* of its truth. Perhaps the following canon might be safely laid down concerning it, “ that in proportion as the *example* of the founder of a

Revelation was calculated to instruct and improve mankind, in that same proportion was this Revelation likely to be of *practical* utility, and therefore calculated to answer the purposes of a Divine interference."

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 24.]

SECTION XXV.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would contain some Doctrines relative to Sacrifice and Atonement for our Sins? **

SINCE all men carry about with them some convictions of their being guilty and offending creatures, and the better part of mankind entertain some dubious hopes of *pardon* on their repentance, it would appear highly probable, that if any Revelation were given, it would enlarge upon and explain to us these moral sentiments of our minds.

And more especially since *sacrifices* have been universally prevalent amongst mankind, it seems hardly conceivable that some doctrines of this Revelation should not refer to this striking phenomenon in the worship of all nations, whether barbarous or civilised. For whether the origin of sacrifices be divine or human, they are a clear manifestation of the sentiments of mankind

* See Part II. Sect. 20. and 22.

respecting the propriety of some *atonement* for our sins, beyond that of mere sorrow and repentance.

A Revelation which had been altogether silent on these interesting topics, would plainly have been *unsuited* to the circumstances of mankind; it would not have been adapted to the suggestions of our minds, nor to our situation as *penitent sinners*; but these are canons which have already been laid down as likely to be applicable to any religion coming from God; without which it could not be addressed to intelligent creatures, nor prove in any degree serviceable to their wants, or answerable to their wishes.

Hence, although it would be impossible to anticipate with precision the *exact nature* or *extent* of those doctrines, which might be brought forward in a Divine Revelation, relative to sacrifice and atonement for sin; yet it would have been clearly apparent that something of this kind would be contained therein. Without *some* discoveries on this subject, a Revelation however splendid in its moral system, would not have been

congenial to the sentiments and situations of mankind ; it would want the leading charms for those who feel themselves *guilty* and *criminal* in the sight of God. It might enlarge our *knowledge*, but it would disappoint our *hopes* ; and though it might present a brilliant and dazzling spectacle, yet it would fail of producing any solid or substantial advantages. The whole history of mankind shows that we require, under some form or other, a *sacrificial* kind of worship.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 25.]

SECTION XXVI.

*Is not the Belief of Spiritual Aid and Assistance implied in Natural as well as in Revealed Theology ? **

THERE can be no Religion without *trust* and *confidence* in God, without believing that he is the *rewarder* of those who diligently seek him, and that he is ready to *hear* and *answer* the prayers of those who earnestly call upon his name. But a belief of this kind necessarily implies the persuasion that *some spiritual communications* may subsist between Earth and Heaven. A man who was convinced that his mind and thoughts were totally inaccessible to a Divine influence would hardly prevail on himself to address any supplication to God; he would feel himself beyond the reach of that power to which he must apply for aid, and would therefore think it vain to implore his protection in danger, or his comfort in affliction.

The doctrine of spiritual agency is but

* See Part II. Sect. 21.

the doctrine of a *providence* carried into the regions of *mind*; and whoever believes that a superintending power watches over *external* nature, can hardly doubt that the same power extends its influence to the faculties of our *souls*. Indeed it may be questioned whether there could be *any* providence, if we were to exclude its influence from the intellectual world: for the assistance of providence seems generally to be rendered through the intervention of our minds; so that if all *spiritual communications* of this kind were destroyed, there could be little or no benefit derived to us from its exclusive operations on *physical* and *external* nature.

The accounts of all nations, whether savage or civilised, coincide in these views; for no nation has been destitute of *some* kind of worship addressed to the Supreme, and prayer is the dictate of *nature*, not less than the doctrine of *grace*. It is the *involuntary* language of a creature who feels his weakness, who confesses his wants, who is conscious that he is supported day after day by that power which originally made him,

and who feels impelled, by every sentiment of his mind, to betake himself to this power for refuge in his dangers and help in his difficulties.

But if these feelings of universal nature had not been deducible from *facts*, it would have been easy to collect the *opinions* of the wisest moralists and philosophers of antiquity, relative to the subject of spiritual assistance. Thus Cicero, in his book *De Natura Deorum*, having mentioned several of the most eminent individuals who had appeared in Greece and Rome, adds, that none of them would have obtained that height of virtue, “*Nisi Deo juvante.*” He then adds, “*Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit.*” And Seneca affirms repeatedly the same doctrine, “*Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est.*”—“*Nulla sine Deo mens bona est.*” Epist. 41. and 73.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 26.]

SECTION XXVII.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would confirm the natural Sentiments of Mankind respecting the Immortality of the Soul? **

SINCE all the obligations of natural religion are founded on the belief of our existence in a state beyond the present, and since the native sentiments of mankind incline them to hope and expect such a state of future existence, it seems to be essential to any Revelation coming from God, that it should establish on clear and intelligible evidence the doctrine of the *immortality of the soul*, and the continuance of our *personal identity* hereafter. For however probable these doctrines might appear to the eye of reason, and however necessary to complete the scheme of natural religion; yet it is plain that mankind were always in great doubt and anxiety respecting them. The corrup-

* See Part II. Sect. 23.

tion and dissolution of the *body* made them hesitate respecting the preservation of the *soul* after death ; and even of those who allowed its *existence*, yet many denied that it would be subject to *rewards* or *punishments* for the deeds done in that body from which they conceived it to be separated for ever.

Supposing any Revelation, then, to be given by God to man, it would appear highly probable that some *further* information would be afforded us on these interesting subjects. There would be a reasonable prejudice, I think, against any such professing Revelation, if it had *not* contained some discoveries of this nature, whereas, on the contrary, if it *should* contain them, this prejudice ought not only to be removed, but a prepossession in favour of its truth should be substituted in its stead.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 27.]

SECTION XXVIII.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be sanctioned by the Doctrine of Eternal Rewards and Punishments? **

SINCE in all laws, whether natural or civil, the hopes of reward and the apprehensions of punishment are the chief motives by which obedience is secured, it would appear highly probable, that if any revelation were to come to us in the form of a *divine law*, it would also be armed with *similar means* of enforcing its obligations. The whole of the *providential government* of nature being carried on through these channels of reward and punishment, there would be a strong presumption, that in any *revealed dispensation* addressed to man, the same method of influencing our moral and intellectual faculties would also be pursued.

But since a Revelation has an immediate

* See Part II. Sect. 24 and 25.

and necessary connection with *eternity*, and since all its promises and threatenings must be fetched from a state of existence beyond the grave, (at least so far as it is a *religious* and not a *civil* dispensation,) it would appear that these promises and threatenings must likewise partake of that *unchangeable* nature which reason and natural religion teach us to ascribe to a state of immortality.

If then, with moralists of all ages, we are led to contemplate the present world as a scene of discipline and preparation for *eternity*, what can be more probable than that the character which we form below shall accompany us into this *fixed* and *permanent* state of being hereafter, and that we shall be rewarded or punished in that *unchangeable* state, according to our lives and actions in this world of probationary trial?

And the *apparent severity* with which many vices are punished in the present life, so as to admit of no alleviation from sorrow and repentance, is, to say the least of it, a strong symptom of the *possibility* that there may be punishments which are *final* and

immutable in the world to come ; accordingly they have, for the most part, produced this effect upon the general opinions of mankind, the great majority in all ages contemplating our state after death as a state of *endless* happiness or misery.

Nor does it appear that any tolerable degree of obedience to the divine laws could have been otherwise secured, than by the influence of these *eternal* rewards and punishments. The vast capacities of our minds are not to be satisfied with any thing short of this *infinity* of duration, neither our hopes nor our fears could have been governed by *limited* and *transitory* retributions. If, with this belief prevailing on our minds, we all know and feel how difficult it is to withstand the temptations of vice, and to make the hopes of endless enjoyments eclipse the fascinations of momentary but immediate pleasures ; how could our passions have been daunted by penalties which were *infinitely less* tremendous, or our virtues have been incited by rewards which were *infinitely less* alluring ?

Nor does it appear, by any thing which

passes in *this* world, that punishments, however severe, always lead to the correction and amendment of the offender. There are habits of vice which seem to be incorrigible by moral means, in which, suffering leads to *rebellion* rather than to *repentance*, and where the only advantage to be derived from the sufferings of the guilty consists in the *warning* which they hold out for the instruction of *others*.

Yet, though it seems probable that the doctrine of *eternal* rewards and punishments would be contained in a Divine Revelation, this can by no means imply, that different individuals should not be punished or rewarded with very different degrees of happiness or misery. Without such distinctions, there could be no *moral* equity observed; there could be no correspondence *hereafter* to that inconceivable variety of characters and gradations which we know to exist in the *present* life. “That every man shall be rewarded according to his works,” is the dictate of *Reason*, not less than the discovery of *Revelation*; but that the miserable shall never

become happy, nor the happy become miserable; this seems essential to a state which is intended as a *final* and *immutable* separation between the righteous and the wicked.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 28.]

SECTION XXIX.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, would it not in all Probability contain some Doctrines above the Reach of our Natural Faculties ? **

WHOMEVER considers the *imperfections* of human knowledge and the *limited* range of our powers of thought and conception, must be prepared to admit the probability, that in many respects we should *very partially* comprehend the doctrines and discoveries of a revealed religion. For our natural powers remaining in the same state as before this Revelation was announced, there would certainly exist a great disparity between our faculties of comprehension and many of those doctrines of which it might assure us. Hence they would necessarily be prepared rather as *articles of faith* than as the *deductions of reason*, as truths to be received on the authority of the proposer,

* See Part II. Sect. 26.

rather than conclusions which might have been elicited by our own understandings.

Considering the *present* state of the human mind, it may be questioned whether any religion would have been adapted to our nature and external circumstances, which was not in some measure *mysterious* and *incomprehensible* by reason. We are endowed with a strong faculty of awe and admiration and amazement, but these are sentiments which are connected with our *imperfect* attainments. The worship and adoration of man necessarily partake of those mixed and intermediate principles which arise out of *partial* knowledge and *imperfect* apprehension: we live and move in this dubious twilight even in what regards things *temporal* and *material*; why, then, should we be surprised if the same intermixture of light and darkness should prevail over our *spiritual* treatment?

In our knowledge of things below, we see but a little way, and that little very indistinctly; all our philosophy convinces us of our ignorance; it is but a record of *facts*, not the developement of *first prin-*

ciples. The unjust as well as the just must live by an exercise of their *faith*. Surely such a world would be ill suited to any religion which did not partake of a similar combination of light and shade. There would not be any *harmony* or *consistence* between our knowledge of things natural and spiritual, if the latter were clearly developed, whilst the former lay clouded in dimness and twilight. It is sufficient to render such a Revelation credible, if it should inform us plainly of *our duties*, whilst its doctrines are partially unfolded. Had the *whole* of its scheme been opened to our view, it is probable that either our faculties must have undergone some alteration, or that such discoveries would have rendered us unfit to remain in our present external situation.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 29.]

SECTION XXX.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, does it not seem probable that it would be attended with some external and positive Institutions ? **

As mankind are at present constituted, it does not seem possible that any Religion could be upheld amongst them which was not embodied, in some degree, with appointments of a *positive* description. A merely spiritual worship is plainly not adapted to creatures of our rank and situation ; it is far too sublime to meet the exigencies of human nature.

It may be doubted, indeed, whether we could form a proper conception of the nature of any Revelation which had not some *positive* institution appointed by its founder. Without such appointment, its nature would be too general and abstract, perhaps, to come up to our *notion* of a Revealed Reli-

* See Part II. Sect. 27.

gion. At any rate, there would be the greatest reason to apprehend that the *memory* of this Revelation would gradually pass away; for positive institutions, ordained by the founder of a religion, are, of all methods, the plainest and most forcible to uphold its memory and preservation.

There is another advantage connected with such *positive* appointments, which has an immediate relation to a Revealed Religion. They seem to rest more immediately on the authority of the founder than those duties which carry with them an *abstract* and *inherent* obligation. But this *authority* it is of the highest consequence to enforce, because it is connected with our obedience to all the other precepts of Religion, and is in itself a *moral* and *religious* duty.

To this it may be added, that *positive* institutions, which depend on the authority of *the founder* of a religion, have a great tendency to prevent an unnecessary multiplication of useless rites and ceremonies, since *the same* authority can never be pleaded in the behalf of *subsequent* additions. Since the

nature of man requires *some* of these external appointments, it seems far more prudent that they should emanate from the authority of the *founder*, than be left to the casual invention of *others*. To keep up any thing like *unity* and *connection* amongst the followers of the same religion, it seems necessary that its author should have appointed some symbols of external worship, in which *all* his disciples should agree.

In support of this reasoning, we may appeal to every form of religion which has been prevalent amongst mankind. The rites and festivals of Paganism were founded on these common principles of our nature; and the institutions of Numa, Lycurgus, and Mahomet, not less than those of the Jewish legislator, may assure us that no religion can be maintained amongst any people, which is not supported with some ceremonial appointments.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 30.]

SECTION XXXI.

*Is it not equally unphilosophical in Revealed as in Natural Theology, to argue upon Suppositions instead of enquiring into Facts ? **

THE history of human knowledge has led all sober-minded men to the conviction, that whatever progress may be made in science and civilisation, by diligently enquiring into *the works* of nature ; yet that it is hopeless to look for any safe or valuable information from speculating how the world might have been *differently* constituted. In all physical enquiries, we are obliged to take facts as they are now set before us ; in our metaphysical reasonings, we examine into the actual state of our *minds* ; whilst in our moral system, we contemplate man as he actually exists in civil society. Hence,

* See Part II. Sect. 28.

as Bacon expresses it, “ Man, who is the servant and interpreter of nature, can act and understand no farther than he has either in *operation* or in *contemplation* observed the method and order of nature.”

The same method of *practical* investigation is also requisite in our researches into *Revealed* Theology. We are not more at liberty to substitute conjectures for facts in this than in any other department of human knowledge. It is our duty to judge of its credibility both from its *internal* and its *external* evidences. In the first, we compare it with the *moral principles* of our minds, and then we deduce its *probable* truth from its connection with our reason and happiness. In the second, we examine into its *historical testimonies*, and then we decide upon its *authenticity* from the number, the worth, and the agreement of its witnesses. This is a sober and practical investigation, suited to our faculties and corresponding to the methods of *inductive* science. But it cannot be philosophical to argue from some real or supposed diffi-

culties, as if the whole Revelation were altogether false, should the general evidence preponderate in its favour. If such objections were allowed to prevail upon other subjects, they would lead to unlimited scepticism, and to the destruction of the whole fabric of human knowledge.

The only just and legitimate subjects of enquiry are the *facts* and *evidences* of Revelation as they relate to the *human mind* or to the testimonies of *history*. If we have sufficient proof of its probability,—nay, of being barely *possible*, it is then our duty to examine into its claims as *a matter of fact*. But when its truth, in this respect, has been once admitted, then we are no longer at liberty to treat it as a matter of *theory* and *conjecture*, or to speculate how it might have been *otherwise* constituted. The *doctrines* of Revelation will then stand upon equal authority with the facts of nature, or with the plainest *dictates* of Natural Religion ; and we are no more at liberty to question the truth of any doctrine which is recorded in this *acknow-*

ledged Revelation, than to doubt of the moral justice of God, or to question his right to command our unlimited obedience.

As the believer in *Natural Theology* should confine his observations to an interpretation of the works of nature, without presuming to *correct* the established laws of Providence; so the believer in *Revealed Theology* is called upon to yield a similar submission to what he acknowledges to be the same authority. In *his* situation, the office of reason is confined to the selection of a pure text, and to the discovery of the most just and natural interpretation. To call in theory and conjecture, would be to deny the *authority* of the Revelation itself; it would be to act the part of Alphonsus, who, though a Theist, pretended that he could improve the constitution of the world.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 31.]

SECTION XXXII.

*Are not the Evidences both of Natural and Revealed Theology ultimately dependent on our Belief in the Divine Veracity ? **

ALTHOUGH there be a real and important distinction between the evidence of those things which depend on faith and reason, (See Locke, book iv. ch. 18.) yet it would appear as if both of them were finally resolvable into *our confidence* on the Divine justice and rectitude.

When we believe any thing as reported to us by the testimony of *our own senses*, we take for granted that these senses are constituted according to truth and equity, and that they are calculated to convey *real knowledge*, and not given us for the purposes of *deception*. If we did not take this for granted, we should remain *sceptical* even in matters of *strict demonstration*.

When we believe any thing as reported to us *by others*, we receive it because it is

* See Part II. Sect. 29.

a fundamental principle of human nature to believe a credible fact when delivered to us on sufficient testimony. In either case it is *possible* that we may have been deceived. Our senses may have been mistaken, or our witnesses may have been deceived, or may be willing to deceive us. But since human life could not be carried on without this *confidence* on our own faculties, and on those of others, and since we know that in a vast majority of instances, truth is told rather than falsehood, we are irresistibly impelled by the principles of our nature, to rely upon both these kinds of evidence.

“ Every kind of reasoning,” says Dr. Reid, “ for the veracity of our faculties amounts to no more than taking their own testimony for this veracity, and this we must do implicitly, until God gives us some *new* faculties to sit in judgment upon the *old*. If any truth can be said to be *prior* to all others in the order of nature, this seems to have the best claim; because in every instance of assent, whether upon intuitive, demonstrative, or probable evidence,

the truth of our faculties is taken for granted, and is, as it were, one of the premises on which our assent is grounded.” *

Hence, the foundation of all our knowledge consists in *our confidence on the Divine veracity*, and our belief that things are constituted with a relation to truth, and that our own faculties and those of other men are formed with a regard to what is just and equitable. In this respect the evidence of testimony, of reason, and of sense, are established on one and the same basis. The grounds of Natural and Revealed Theology are equally dependent on our *faith* in the Divine Rectitude, and on our conviction, that we are made *capable* of attaining truth, whether it be conveyed to us through our own senses, or through that reliance upon testimony which we are *naturally* disposed to place on the well authenticated relations of others.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 32.]

* Reid’s Essays, Vol. ii. ch. 5.

SECTION XXXIII.

*Is not a Revelation delivered in an Historical Form, and sanctioned with the Form of a Divine Law, necessarily more clear and intelligible, than a Religion arising out of the Deductions of Abstract Reasoning ? **

It is the confession of Lord Bolingbroke †, “ that nothing seems in speculation so proper to enforce moral obligation, as a true Revelation, or a Revelation believed to be true.” This *propriety* arises out of the superior clearness and precision which must necessarily belong to a Religion delivered as matter of *fact* and of *history*, over all the uncertainties of *abstract* reasoning.

Supposing then that a Revelation of this kind should contain no *new* or *original* discoveries ; yet upon the bare ground of the *authority* and the *clearness* with which it would ascertain and republish these doctrines and duties which were before but im-

* See Part II. Sect. 30.

† See his Works, vol. v. p. 268.

perfectly apprehended, it would prove of the greatest benefit and advantage to mankind.

It seems highly probable that such a Revelation would be announced to us under the form of a Divine law, emanating immediately from the Supreme legislator; and enforced by the terrors of Eternal punishments, and by the hopes of eternal rewards. For since God is our *moral* governor, it would appear likely that He should adopt a course at once so suited to his own character and to our conditions, especially when we remember that this procedure would bear a close analogy to the administration of *civil society*, which is also in some degree of Divine appointment. The written laws of nations are for the most part composed of those portions of Natural Religion which concern the welfare of civil life, being transplanted out of abstract *precepts* into *laws*, and armed with that civil influence and authority which may insure the obedience of a whole community.

But since there would be such a clear and decided superiority in a Revelation of

this description, it deserves the consideration of every reflecting Deist, whether there may not on this account arise some indirect *probability* in favour of such a Revelation. Does it appear consistent with our sentiments of the Divine Wisdom, that the method which of all others is the most *congenial* to our minds and understandings should have been totally overlooked ? At any rate, if a Religion professing to be a Divine Revelation should exist in the world, and should approach us in the *very form* which we have here contemplated, is he not bound by reason and good sense, and by all the obligations of Natural Religion, to *examine* into its evidences ?

Query. Would it not greatly add to the force and authority of any Revelation, if it had been first addressed to a *particular* people ; and if its beneficial effects had been exemplified in their civil and national records ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 33.]

SECTION XXXIV.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, would it not probably be intended for the Benefit of the whole Human Race? **

If we admit that the Creator of the World, from some extraordinary circumstances relative to our species, should interfere to save and rescue his offspring, it certainly appears most consonant to our reason, and to our conceptions of the Divine attributes, that He should interfere for the sake of *all*, rather than for the exclusive advantage of *a few*. Though it would, perhaps, be too much to affirm that this is essential to our notions of God's *justice*, (for the whole being matter of *grace* and *favour*, it could hardly be brought under the consideration of *strict right*,) yet it must be allowed that we could scarcely reconcile such extreme partiality to our sentiments of infinite wisdom and unlimited goodness.

* See Part II. Sect. 32.

There is a grandeur in the attempt also, as relative to the *whole world* rather than to a *limited* number of individuals, which would and which ought to prepossess us in favour of the more comprehensive scheme of mercy. Nor upon looking abroad on the creation, should we feel disposed to think that any were devoted to certain and inevitable destruction. For though it be true that some are placed in more favourable situations, both for virtue and for happiness, than others ; yet it would be impossible to show that any individuals are *entirely* cut off from all means of self-improvement, and from all capability of temporal happiness. The blessings of creation and preservation extend universally to all mankind ; and though dealt out in various degrees, yet there is a principle of *compensation* discoverable in nature which goes far to equalize our sufferings and enjoyments. Thus, even *savage* life has some pleasures and advantages which are peculiar to itself ; so has a life of *poverty* and *labour*, compared with one of *ease* and *affluence*. The acutest pain is generally

accompanied with some intermissions of pleasurable ease, and there is compassion discoverable even in the circumstances of our death. *

These, with many observations of the like nature, might lead us to expect that if any Revelation were afforded, it would be afforded for the benefit of *all*, rather than of a *few*. And though we should not, I think, be justified in rejecting a Revelation because it did not correspond with such hopes and views, yet it would be a considerable presumption against it, so that some strong *counteracting* evidence would be requisite to overcome our prejudices arising from such *disappointment* of our natural expectations.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 34.]

* See Paley's Natural Theology, ch. 26. p. 496—502.

SECTION XXXV.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it probable that it would meet with universal Success? **

THOUGH it would undoubtedly be a considerable presumption against the truth of any Revelation, if it had *universally* or even *generally* failed of procuring the assent of those to whom it was addressed, yet there is no ground at all for supposing that it would in *all* cases silence the cavils and objections of those who from some unhappy prejudice (from whatever cause it might arise) were disinclined to admit of its truth. Upon the contrary, such *universal* success would show that its evidences were *irresistible*, and would therefore leave no exercise for the *moral* powers; a kind of treatment which is altogether foreign to our experience of God's providential dealings with mankind.

* See Part II. Sect. 33.

It may be doubted, indeed, whether any degree of *moral* or *historical* evidence will, in *all* cases, avail to overcome the deeply-rooted prejudices of those who are averse to the belief of any moral or religious doctrine. The mind is sometimes impenetrable to the strongest arguments, so that nothing short of a total destruction of liberty of thought and will could avail to produce conviction.

What might be naturally expected, as to *the success* of any Revelation, would be this,—that it should gain the assent of the great majority of mankind, both of the learned and of the unlearned ; that it should prosper in proportion to the advancement of sound and useful knowledge, and to the progressive stages of civilization ; that fresh evidences should *incidentally* arise in its favour from the political circumstances of mankind ; and that the oppositions which were made to it should not only fail to overturn, but should ultimately conduce to its advantage and promotion.

Any Revelation, possessing such a degree of general success, might fairly appeal to

its history as a presumptive argument in its favour, though it had failed in particular instances of convincing some individuals of great talents, and even a few, perhaps, of acknowledged virtues.

In this want of *universal* success, it would correspond only with the fortunes of *Natural Theology*. There have been some who have denied the existence of God, others who have questioned his Providence, and multitudes who, acknowledging both, have lived, as if they practically believed in *neither*. If a Revelation then should experience *similar* treatment, it could not be seriously urged as any argument against its credibility; for in reality it would but exemplify its *alliance* with the course of nature.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 35.]

SECTION XXXVI.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that both its Doctrines and Evidences would afford Scope for the Exercise of Moral Candour ? **

It has been sometimes rashly asserted, that supposing any Revelation to be given by God to man, its evidences would be so clear and perspicuous as to admit of no doubts or differences of opinion. But to this it may be replied, that *morality* does not admit of *demonstration*, strictly so called, which is altogether peculiar to mathematical propositions. Or if it be meant that every truth which it contains should be laid before the mind with the utmost clearness and precision, then it should be remembered, that by such procedure *one* great object of *moral* truth would be entirely destroyed, viz. the exercise which it affords for *candour* in judging of its force.

* See Part II. Sect. 33.

It is well observed by Bishop Butler, that these speculative difficulties in religion are parallel to the allurements and temptations of ordinary life, and that to some minds they afford a principal part of their trial and probation. Indeed it would go far to defeat the ends of a religious dispensation, if no freedom were left to the mind in judging of its arguments. It is plain also, that such a religion would be at total variance with the proofs and evidences of Natural Theology, which are so far from being demonstrative and clear to every careless beholder, that they require both honesty and consideration to bring us to yield our assent to their authority. For if any man, through sophistry or an unreasonable demand for evidence clear of every difficulty, should withhold his belief of things relating to the present life ; he may soon find arguments to render him equally sceptical in natural and in Revealed Religion.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 36.]

SECTION XXXVII.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be particularly adapted to the Poor? **

SINCE God is the common Father of mankind, who loves all his children with equal affection, it appears highly probable that if he made any extraordinary Revelation of his will, this Revelation, as far as it was made known, would prove universally beneficial to all classes of society, but more particularly that it would benefit those who require it most, who constitute the bulk of mankind, and who had been neglected and forgotten in the attempts of human reason.

Whatever effect the institutions of ancient philosophy might possess on their immediate adherents, it is plain they were far too narrow and confined to produce any advantage to the great bulk of the community. There was still some medium

* See Part. II. Sect. 34.

wanted for plain and popular instruction in moral and religious truth, which might apply to the circumstances of *all* people, without regard to their stations in society, or to their advancement in elegant or scientific attainments. If any thing coming to us in the form of a Divine Revelation, had not contained this valuable desideratum, I think that it might have been fairly viewed as no slight presumption against its claims ; whereas, on the contrary, if it furnished us with this medium of popular instruction, it ought to be regarded as a probable argument of its truth.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 37.]

SECTION XXXVIII.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, does it not seem probable that it would acquire the Assent of the Majority of the Learned?**

THE writings of the ancient philosophers may be arranged generally under two divisions. They are either serious or comic; they are intended as *grave* investigations of truth, or as *ludicrous* exhibitions of error.

When we look into the *former*, we find numberless confessions of that ignorance and uncertainty which they felt in all their Religious speculations. The utmost to which the wisest of them aspired, was probability; and this probability was brought almost down to scepticism by the endless disputes and divisions amongst themselves.

When we consult the *latter*, we find a total disbelief of the existing opinions, without any attempt to substitute others. They *both* agree in this point, that the philosophic sentiments were at variance with the

* See Part II. Sect. 35.

vulgar creed. Thus, as Mr. Gibbon expresses it, “ The various forms of worship which prevailed in the Heathen world, were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosophers as equally false, and by the legislators as equally useful.”

Let any reflecting Theist consider whether this was not an *unnatural* state of things, and whether if any Revelation were to come from God to man, it would not in all probability rectify this *strange opposition* between the ignorant and the learned. Then let him consider whether it would not operate against his belief of such a Revelation, if this opposition had still continued; and whether it ought not to operate in its *favour*, if it should be found to have *harmonized* the sentiments of the majority of the learned, with those of the populace?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 38.]

SECTION XXXIX.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be gradual and progressive, rather than sudden and instantaneous? **

ACCORDING to the general principle which has been laid down in this work respecting the probable agreement between a Revelation and the course of Nature, it seems natural to expect that such Revelation should have been *gradual* and *progressive*, growing up with the age of the world, and with the advancement of knowledge and civilization, rather than *suddenly* flashed upon mankind at their first creation, in all its splendor and magnificence.

Since it is plainly the intention of Providence that mankind should be placed in very different degrees of moral responsibility, it would certainly interfere with this principle of *variety*, if they had all enjoyed precisely the *same* degrees of reli-

* See Part II. Sect. 36.

gious light and information. But to speak freely, this uniformity would be unattainable under the present constitution of Nature; for supposing the knowledge of this Revelation to have been *universal*, yet still the different talents, situations, &c. of individuals would have almost equally *varied* their circumstances and opportunities of moral improvement.

Since the most valuable discoveries are many of them of recent invention, since the knowledge, laws, and civilization of mankind have grown up in *slow* and *imperceptible* increase, it cannot be deemed as any *anomaly* if the Divine government should have been carried on in a *similar* manner. It may be doubted indeed, whether without an absolute change in the whole course of Providence, any Revelation could have been equally addressed to all mankind. How, for example, are savages and barbarians capable of estimating the force of *moral* evidence? But if the existence of such savage and barbarous nations be objected to, it is an objection, not against a *supposed Revelation* but against the *actual state of nature*. It

might have been foreseen, therefore, that unless the whole of this Revelation were to have been attended with a series of uninterrupted miracles, it must have been addressed with very different degrees of light and evidence, to the different ages of the world; and that while some nations would have made a considerable progress in its knowledge, others would possess it with far inferior advantages, whilst some, from their total want of civilization, would be altogether excluded from its temporal benefits.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 39.]

SECTION XL.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, would not its permanent Continuance become one of the leading Evidences of its Truth? **

It is one of the constant characteristics of craft and error, that its reign is *short* and *transient*, whilst truth grows stronger by *continuance*, and gathers *stability* from age.

The false religions and idolatries of mankind have ever been inconstant and mutable, changing with the manners and customs of nations ; but if any Revelation were to be given by God, it is probable that it would be distinguished from these by its *stability* and *continuance*. It would not be a mere presumption, but a full proof of the falsity of such a professed Revelation, if it underwent the same changes which are always attendant on merely human opinions.

* See Part II. Sect. 37.

Supposing, then, that a religion existed in the world, professing to be a Divine Revelation, which exhibited strong marks of this stability and continuance ; supposing that it had survived the revolutions of many empires, and outlived the change of opinions, that it had flourished in nations of widely diversified manners, that it still evinced no symptoms of feebleness and decay, but seemed vigorous and progressive, and elastic in its spirit, I ask whether such singular and uncommon manifestations are not to be reputed as some presumptive arguments in its favour ? Unless all circumstantial evidence is to be decried as nugatory, something must be allowed to circumstances of this description. The human mind is so constituted that it cannot overlook such particulars without doing violence to its own convictions. The mere existence of a religion, which has continued unchanged for nearly two thousand years ; which professes to be connected with another religion, the most ancient in the world, and which has spread knowledge and civilization over a considerable part of the

globe; the mere *existence* of such a religion at the present day, is a sufficient reason to enquire into the truth of its pretensions.

These considerations are closely connected with the belief of a superintending Providence. If we could adopt the conclusion, that *such* Religion was no more deserving of our examination than *another* which had been transient and mutable, and which had passed away with the fashion of the world, then, I apprehend, that however we might profess to believe in the doctrines of Natural Theology, yet that we should in our hearts be at no great distance from the creed of Epicurus.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 40.]

SECTION XLI.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would become the chief Medium of diffusing Knowledge, Happiness, and Civilization among Mankind? **

THIS probability arises out of the connection which it is presumed would subsist between Natural and Revealed Theology, so that the knowledge, practice, and natural consequences of the *former* would arise out of the progress, advancement, and prosperity of the *latter*. If those countries which had enjoyed the Revelation, were not distinguished from others by their superior knowledge, civilization, and progress in civil and social happiness, then I think both the *importance* and *utility* of this Revelation, as connected with the *present* life, might be reasonably questioned. But if it wanted this kind of evidence, it would want a very material part of those arguments which might recommend it to the notice of sober

* See Part II. Sect. 38.

and reflecting men. Indeed upon this supposition, the whole train of reasoning which we have employed, would be destroyed and broken.

This probability also arises from the belief that the author of this Revelation, being the author of *nature*, would extend the *temporal happiness* and comforts of his creatures, by the same method in which He promoted their *spiritual* and *religious* welfare ; and that thus his providential care and goodness would be blended with the love and mercy which he would display in this *peculiar* dispensation. Nor is this probability dependent on merely *abstract* speculation ; it is warranted by our *experience* of his providential government in nature. Amidst many inequalities, the course of Providence is plainly of a *moral* tendency. Virtue is *naturally* rewarded with social happiness ; it tends *spontaneously* to secure the blessings of good order and civilisation. But if such be the effects of that *imperfect* virtue which arises from an attention to the duties of *natural religion*, the same good consequences, to a far higher extent, might

be *naturally* looked for from the *superior* advantages of a revealed dispensation.

Should there be any Religion then in this world professing to be a Divine Revelation, it would be a just presumption *against* the credibility of its claims, if it *had not* promoted the knowledge, happiness, and social prosperity of those nations which had embraced its belief. But upon the contrary, if it *had* effected these important purposes, then an equal degree of presumption ought to arise in its *favour*. This fact would become an evidence of its connection with Providence, and with the principles of human happiness, and would correspond with those *natural anticipations* which we are inclined to form respecting any Revelation of God to his intelligent creatures.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 41.]

SECTION XLII.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, would it not be embraced by Men of the greatest Probity and Virtue ? **

THOUGH, as we have remarked, it could not be expected that a Revelation should be successful in producing conviction in *all* instances, yet it would be a great presumption against its truth, if those who should refuse it their assent, were for the most part men of distinguished *probity* and *moral excellence*. It would be subversive of all our notions of equity, to believe that the evidences of any Religion coming from God should not be sufficient to satisfy the generality of those who sincerely lived up to the duties of Natural Theology.

The kind of persons who might be expected to be found amongst its adversaries, would be, first, those who *unduly* exalted the powers and capacities of the mind, and

* See Part II. Sect. 39.

whose *pride* would not allow them to stoop to the humility of *penitents*; secondly, those who substituted *ridicule* for calm *investigation*; and thirdly, those of *profligate* and *licentious* principles and conduct. Now the opposition of persons of this description, especially those of the latter class, so far from forming any argument *against* the truth of a Revelation, ought to be esteemed as a considerable presumption in its *favour*; because they would constitute a powerful contrast to those who conscientiously believed in its doctrines, and lived up to its precepts.

The whole argument, therefore, would turn upon a question of fact; viz. upon the *moral* character and conduct of those who were the chief opponents to such a Revelation. If these were generally men of distinguished worth, probity, and moral excellence, then I think the presumption would lie *against* its credibility. But if, on the other hand, they were generally *deficient* in these respects, then their opposition, so far from being any argument *against* its probability, should incline us to

think more favourably of that Religion which had enabled its followers to excel them in these points of moral obligation.

In forming this decision, we should be supported by the best principles of our nature, which strongly dispose us to think *favourably* of any opinions which have been adopted by the majority of the wise and the good. It is *possible* that such men may have been deceived, but the *probability* is altogether on their side; and it is this *probability* which lays us under an obligation to *examine* into the grounds of their belief.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 42.]

SECTION XLIII.

*On the Supposition of there being any real Revelation, would it not, in all Probability, be easily distinguishable from all others which were false and spurious? **

It appears extremely probable that if there existed any *genuine* Revelation of God to Man, there would also be several *false* and *spurious* Revelations, springing from human craft and ingenuity. But supposing this to be the case, there would be every reason to expect such a plain and manifest *superiority* on the part of the former, that no kind of rational *comparison* or *resemblance* could be found between them. It is not conceivable that the artifices and fictions of mortals should be able to bear any competition with the exertions of infinite power and wisdom.

What might be expected, under such circumstances, would be this; 1st, That whereas the *true* Revelation should appeal

* See Part II. Sect. 40.

to plain and public miracles, these *false Revelations* would either appeal to no miracles at all, or to such as were not supported by sufficient evidence; 2dly, That the false Revelations should be mere *imitations* of the true, being subsequent in point of time; 3dly, That whereas the true Revelation should flourish amongst the most *free* and *enlightened nations*, the others should be confined to the *barbarous* and *ignorant*; 4thly, That whereas the true Revelation should possess a faultless code of morals, the others should blend human frailties and *passions* with the precepts and doctrines which they inculcated.

Now supposing these representations to be fairly realized, it does not appear that the existence of such false Revelations should be allowed to prejudice the mind against an enquiry into any particular Revelation which possessed such a *manifest* and *decided superiority* over others. Upon the contrary, this plain superiority ought to be regarded as a presumptive evidence in its favour, because it would naturally incline us to believe that some power and

wisdom, more than human, had enabled it to escape those faults and errors which are universally incident to the works of men.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 43.]

SECTION XLIV.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be calculated, in its general Principles, to exalt the Mercy of God, and to humble the Pride of Man? **

A REVELATION being in itself an extraordinary act of *mercy*, intended for the benefit of those who could not attain happiness by means of *their own* natural exertions, there would arise a strong probability that the general tenor of its doctrines would be calculated to impress us with a sense of our own *weakness* and *infirmities*, and to magnify the *Divine goodness* which had thus been offered to our relief.

A Revelation which had not impressed us with such convictions, would not be suited to the present nature and circumstances of mankind. It would have filled

* See Part II. Sect. 41.

us with that arrogance and self-conceit which would be altogether destructive of *natural piety*. Nor could it then have been adapted to the situation of mankind, as *penitent sinners*, who may hope for the *mercy* of God, but who have forfeited their claims upon his *justice*.

From views like these, it might have been naturally anticipated, that if any Revelation were given by God to man, it would have been given as an act of mere *grace and favour*; and that in all its doctrines it would bear a manifest reference to our *frail* and *guilty* situation. So far, then, from being prejudiced against any religion, aspiring to the character of a Revelation, because it contained doctrines of this description, we ought to consider it as an indirect evidence in its favour, because no religion could have come from God, or have been suited to the wants of man, which had not treated us as *helpless* and *sinful* creatures.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 44.]

SECTION XLV.

*On the Supposition of any Revelation, would it not probably advance greatly the Cause of Natural Religion? **

THE obligations of *morality* being immutable and eternal, there would be every reason to expect not only that a Revelation should not *contradict* any precept of natural religion, but that it should become the great medium of bringing mankind into the *knowledge* and *practice* of their moral duties. Even in its peculiar doctrines, we might naturally look for fresh motives to enforce our sentiments of moral obligation.

It seems probable, I think, that much of its evidence, especially in the later ages of the world, would arise from an argument of this kind, which might show that the interests of Natural and Revealed Theology were *indissolubly* united. If it became the

* See Part II. Sect. 42.

ordinary channel by which the most eminent nations were brought to an acquaintance with the duties of natural religion, there would undoubtedly exist a strong presumptive argument in its favour ; whereas, if it had produced but little effect of this kind, this evidence would be entirely wanting ; and a reasonable degree of prejudice would be awakened against its importance and utility, as connected with the present world.

If then the nations who enjoyed this Revelation were not distinguished from others, by a greater attention to the duties of practical morality, if they appeared to differ from them chiefly in their religious *belief*, but not in their outward and visible actions and behaviour, then it might be reasonably surmised that it was nothing more than one of the multiplied forms of superstition. But if, on the contrary, it had become the great instrument by which the duties of natural religion were upheld, if those countries in which it was best understood were pre-eminent for order and virtue, and social security, then all

reasonable men would be under an obligation to enquire into the claims of a religion, which had been the chief medium of propagating those sentiments on which the virtues and moral dignity of our species must depend.

The force of this argument cannot be questioned by those who place a high and exclusive value upon the doctrines of Natural Theology. Upon the supposition of any Revelation, it must, according to *their* opinions, have been chiefly a republication of Natural Religion. If so, they might reasonably look for the purest profession of the doctrines of Natural Theology amongst those who had been favoured with such extraordinary assistance ; and should there be any nations who were remarkably distinguished by their superiority in this respect, this fact would deserve their *particular* attention, from its close congeniality with their opinions.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 45.]

SECTION XLVI.

*Upon the Supposition of any Revelation, is it not probable that it would be the final Cause of Nature? **

A MORAL and religious dispensation, published immediately by Divine authority, is the most sublime and august conception which can be possibly entertained. Compared to such a dispensation, every thing beside would become secondary and subservient. It would constitute the *purpose* and *moral* of creation. It would be the *mind* and *council* of the Deity operating through such an interference.

What then are the *marks* which might be reasonably looked for in such a *universal* and *transcendant* dispensation? First, it should begin with the *creation*, and should be intended to exist to the *end* of the world. Secondly, It should be published

* See Part II. Sect. 9.

in the name and by the authority of the Maker of heaven and earth. Thirdly, It should be connected with the most important interests of the *whole* human race. Fourthly, It should be calculated to give the highest *glory* to God, and to diffuse *everlasting happiness* amongst intelligent beings. Such appear to be the leading features of a Revelation, which might rank as the *final cause* of the material world ; and if there should exist any religion which seemed to bear these features, I think that it would, on this account alone, deserve the attention and examination of all serious and reflecting men.

From the marks of wisdom and design which appear in the creation, we are naturally led to conclude that there must be some great *moral* system carrying on in nature. The grandeur of mere *machinery* does not seem adequate to the infinity of the Governor of the Universe. But by the confessions of the wisest philosophers, we shall look in vain for this *moral* system in any of the ordinary occurrences of our world. What hypothesis then can be so

natural as that this moral system may be contained in a Revelation published immediately by the author of nature?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 46.]

Recapitulation of the Evidence.

THOUGH from the number and variety of the presumptive proofs which have been here collected, it would be impossible to present the reader with any synoptical view of the argument without going through the whole series, yet it may be useful to offer a few remarks upon the *manner* of estimating the force and consistency of that species of evidence which has been now adduced.

First, then, it may be considered as a pile of separate and independent presumptions, all tending towards one conclusion. Allowing each presumption to be no more than a pepper-corn, yet when thrown together, they make something like a heap. It is the number and minuteness of these particles, all so adapted to each other, which make up the Mosaic of the argument.

And here it should be remembered, that though presumptive evidences of this kind do not admit of being accurately weighed

and balanced, yet that they proceed much after the same ratio of increase as the doctrine of chances. When a great number of probabilities concentrate upon a single point, they are not merely to be *added* to each other, but to be *multiplied*. Their aggregate effect will be far greater than if their individual forces were separately considered.

But, secondly, what is of still more importance to remember, is the continual *reiteration* of proof which occurs in this kind of evidence; and which, thus, not only augments the amount of the sum total, but which adds to the force of each particular presumption. To illustrate this reasoning, I would beg leave to adduce the following examples.

Thus the question is started in Sect. 2., Whether a Divine Revelation be not desirable? and from the apparently abstract desirableness of a Revelation, we deduce some distant presumption of its probability. Now if this section were separately considered, the presumption might appear very slight and unsatisfactory. But the same presump-

tion is virtually contained in almost every succeeding section. Thus it is desirable that we should be made acquainted with the creation of the world, Sect. 6. It is desirable to clear up the moral attributes of the Deity, by showing that man was originally created innocent, Sect. 7. It is desirable to explain those contradictions which subsist between reason and passion, that have arisen from the Fall, Sect. 9.; but this knowledge could *only* have been obtained by a Divine Revelation; and therefore the desirableness of such Revelation is shown in several different ways; and, consequently, that probability which was at first only a faint and distant presumption, might afterwards have been stated as a strong and luminous argument.

Again, in Sect. 3., the teachableness of man's nature is urged as a presumptive evidence in favour of a Revelation. This might be thought a very faint and insufficient argument when taken by itself. But, in Sect. 4., it is shown that evidence of a Revelation must necessarily be miraculous. Now, this kind of evidence depends upon

the principle before laid down ; it is connected with the teachableness of human nature ; for if we had been possessed of sufficient *innate* knowledge, there could have been no necessity for such *external* evidence. The same argument is also strengthened by the presumption mentioned in Sect. 29., that a Revelation would contain some mysterious doctrines ; by Sect. 32., that our knowledge is dependent on the Divine veracity ; by Sect. 44., that it would be one of the chief objects of a Revelation to humble human pride, &c. See also Sect. 23. 25. and 26.

So, in Sect. 35., it is mentioned as a probability that the success of a Revelation would not be universal ; and it is hinted that this arises out of the *moral* nature of its evidences, which do not admit of strict demonstration. But the same probability is also connected with Sect. 39., in which is shown that a Revelation would be gradual and progressive ; also with Sect. 36., that it would afford scope for moral candour ; also with Sect. 41., that it would become the medium of diffusing order and civilisation

throughout the world; also with Sect. 42., that it would be supported by the moral superiority of its adherents over the characters of its opponents, &c. &c.

These examples are sufficient to point out the reality of this kind of connection in the evidence. It will be still more apparent, however, from the following table, in which the several sections are arranged according to this method.

*A Table of References by which the force and connection
of the evidences of the First Part may be ascertained.*

Sect.

1. and 2. The Possibility and the Desirableness of a Revelation are illustrated by every argument contained in the whole work.
- 3.—4. 6. 15. 18. 19. 21. 24. 25. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 37. 39.
- 4.—6. 13. 15. 18. 21. 23. 25. 26. 29. 31. 32. 43. 44.
- 5.—This presumption is illustrated throughout the whole.
- 6.—5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 15. 29. 31. 32. 33. 39. 43.
- 7.—6. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.
- 8.—7. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 25. 26. 28. 31. 33. 34. 35.
- 9.—The same.
- 10.—The same.
- 11.—The same.
- 12.—The same.
- 13.—8. 14. 15. 28. 29. 35. 36. 42. 44.
- 14.—5. 8. 9. 10. 11. 15. 29. 35. 42.
- 15.—3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 29.
- 16.—5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 17. 18. 19. 21. 25. 26. 28. 35. 41, &c.
- 17.—3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 11. 16. 18. 19. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 34. 36. 37, &c.
- 18.—2. 3. 4. 7. 16. 17. 19. 21. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 32. 33. 34. 37, &c.
- 19.—3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 16. 17. 18. 25. 26. 28. 42. 44.
- 20.—3. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 14. 16. 18. 19. 22.

Sect.

21.—2. 3. 23. 24. 25. 26. 29. 31. 32. 44.

22.—The argument of this section is illustrated by all those presumptions which are brought forward to point out the connection of Natural and Revealed Theology.

23.—4. 5. 17. 18. 19. 21. 24. 25. 26. 29. 33. 37. 44.

24.—2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 18. 19. 20. 22. 23. 25. 26. 27. 29. 30.
31. 33. 37. 45.

25.—5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 16. 17. 18. 19. 21. 22. 23.
24.

26.—2. 3. 5. 16. 17. 18. 19. 21. 22. 23. 27. 29. 32. 36.
39. 40. 42. 43.

27.—2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 16. 18. 28. 29. 32. 33. 34. 37. 38. 41.
42.

28.—4. 5. 7. 13. 16. 17. 18. 19. 25. 26. 27. 29. 32. 34.
35. 36. 37.

29.—1. 3. 4. 18. 21. 23. 25. 26. 32. 43. 44.

30.—3. 5. 22. 24. 25. 31. 33. 37. 40.

31.—3. 5. 6. 22. 24. 25. 30. 33. 37. 40. 41. 43. 45.

32.—3. 4. 6. 7. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 26. 27. 28. 29.
30. 31. 33. 37. 38, &c.

33.—3. 4. 6. 23. 24. 25. 30. 31. 32. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39.
40. 41. 43. 45.

34.—2. 5. 6. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 16. 17. 18. 19. 25. 26. 27.
28. 32. 37. 38. 39, &c.

35.—5. 8. 9. 10. 11. 13. 14. 16. 19. 28. 36. 38. 39. 42.
43. 44.

36.—4. 5. 8. 9. 10. 11. 14. 16. 19. 25. 28. 29. 30. 35.
38. 39. 42. 44.

37.—3. 18. 24. 27. 28. 30. 33. 34. 40. 41. 42. 44. 45.

38.—3. 4. 5. 27. 28. 32. 34. 36. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 45.

39.—5. 6. 19. 33. 35. 36. 38. 40. 41. 42. 43. 45.

40.—2. 6. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 33. 34.
37. 38. 39, &c.

Sect.

41.—2. 3. 7. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 24. 25. 26. 27. 32. 33.
34. 37, &c.

42.—3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 14. 16. 18. 24. 27. 35. 36.
37. 38. 39, &c.

43.—2. 4. 5. 18. 23. 24. 27. 28. 33. 34. 37. 38. 39. 40.
41. 42, &c.

44.—3. 5. 9. 10. 11. 16. 18. 19. 25. 26. 29. 32. 37.

45.—2. 3. 20. 23. 24. 26. 27. 28. 32. 34. 37. 38. 39. 40.
41. 42, &c.

46.—2. 5. 6. 7. 13. 14. 15. 18. 20. 22. 23. 25. 26. 27.
28. 29. 32. 34. 37. 39. 41. 43.

*A Table of the Coincidences and Connections between the
First and Second Parts of this Work.*

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Part II.

1. and 2. These presumptions are illustrated and confirmed by every section.
- 3.—3. 5. 6. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 23. 24. 26. 29.
30. 34. 35. 36. 37, &c.
- 4.—*Passim.*
- 5.—*Passim.*
- 6.—2. 3. 4. 6. 8. 9. 10. 11. 17. 25. 28. 30. 32. 36. 37.
40. 42. 47.
- 7.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 16. 17. 18. 20. 21. 22.
23. 30. 31. 32. 36. 37. 38, &c.
- 8.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21. 22. 24.
25. 29. 31. 33. 36. 39. 41, &c.
- 9.—3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 15. 16. 20. 21. 22. 24. 27. 31.
32. 33. 36. 39. 41. 42, &c.
- 10.—The same.
- 11.—The same.
- 12.—3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 20. 22. 25. 26. 28. 31. 33.
- 13.—4. 6. 7. 8. 21. 26. 33. 39.
- 14.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8.
- 15.—3. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 20. 21. 24. 33. 39.
- 16.—*Passim.*
- 17.—*Passim.*
- 18.—2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23.
24. 26. 27. 29. 30. 32, &c.
- 19.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21.
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- 20.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 23. 24. 25.
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26. 34. 41. 42. 46.

22.—2. 3. 5. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.
20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 26. 34. 35, &c.

23.—4. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23.
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24.—2. 5. 10. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 22. 23. 26. 29.
34. 42. 43. 46.

25.—2. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.
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26.—2. 4. 7. 8. 9. 10. 21. 26. 29. 31. 32. 34. 37. 38.
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27.—2. 3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 23. 24. 25. 29. 30. 31. 32. 34.
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28.—2. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 12. 20. 21. 23. 24. 25. 31. 32.
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29.—3. 4. 5. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 20. 21. 22. 26. 27.
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30.—3. 5. 10. 20. 22. 27. 28. 29. 31. 32. 34. 37. 45. 46.

31.—3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 19. 23. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 34.
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32.—3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8, &c.

33.—*Passim.*

34.—2. 5. 6. 7. 8. 10. 12. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.
23. 24. 25. 27. 29, &c.

35.—5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 24. 33. 35. 36. 39. 43.

36.—The same.

37.—2. 3. 5. 8. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23.
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42.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.
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45.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.
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Part II.

PART THE SECOND.

INTRODUCTION.

IF we could suppose that nothing more had been shown by the preceding observations, than the bare *possibility* that some Revelation might be given by God to man ; and that there was nothing absurd or contradictory in the supposition to prevent its becoming a subject of rational enquiry ; we might now proceed to examine those *historical* evidences on which the Christian Revelation in particular professes to be founded.

But if, previous to our examination of this historical evidence, we should compare the doctrines and arguments of the Christian religion with those general principles which have been stated as likely to enter into any Revelation of God to man, there would unquestionably arise a strong presumption either for or against its credibility,

in proportion as we found it agreeable or contradictory to those sentiments which are suggested by the operations of reason, or by our experience of the visible government of Providence.

To show the force and reality of this kind of reasoning, let us suppose that Christianity had contradicted these general principles. Let us suppose that its truth was neither desirable nor important ; that it was not founded on miraculous evidence ; that it did not appeal to our rational faculties ; that it had not given an account of the creation of the world, of man's original innocence, nor of his fall from that innocence ; that it was not adapted to a state of moral trial and discipline ; that it did not delineate human nature faithfully ; that it did not inculcate the unity of God ; that it did not harmonise with our conception of his attributes ; that it contained no doctrines beyond our comprehensions ; that it had appointed no medium of approach to the Deity ; that it had offered no hopes of pardon on repentance ; no terrors to impenitent sinners ; that it had proposed no atonement

for our offences ; that it had commanded us to believe we were saved by the death of Christ, without permitting us to worship Him ; that it had promised no spiritual aid and assistance ; that its Author had not instructed us by his example ; that its motives to repentance and holiness were not more powerful than those of reason ; that it had brought no fresh arguments for a future life, and for a state of eternal happiness or misery after death ; that it had no visible and positive institutions ; that it had not inculcated a dependence on the mercy of God, rather than on our own merits ; that its rewards and punishments were not commensurate with the vast capacities of our souls ; that it had not promoted the knowledge, happiness, and civilisation of mankind ; that it was not adapted to the capacities of the poor ; that its truth had not been admitted by the majority of the learned ; that its influence had gradually decayed with its age ; that its enemies had been men of distinguished worth and probity ; that it had not improved both the theory and the practice of morals ; that it was opposed by a regular

and consistent system of Deism ; that it was not intended for the benefit of all mankind, nor capable of becoming a universal religion ; that it did not seem worthy to be esteemed the final cause of nature, &c. &c. Now, let any man, for the sake of *trying* our argument, imagine that Christianity had thwarted and disappointed our natural expectations in such particulars, and he will perceive what it is that we mean by the *connection* of Natural and Revealed religion, and what it is that we aim at by associating its evidences with the philosophy of the human mind.

It is readily admitted that a Revelation notoriously false would in all probability have embraced *some* of these particulars, and thus would have made some approach to the dictates of reason. But this would only verify the remark of St. Austin, “ *nulla falsa doctrina est quæ non aliquid veri permisceat.*” It would show, that to render errors and superstitions plausible, they must partake of the nature of truth ; not that truth is to be undervalued because it is liable to be mingled with error. Besides,

our argument is cumulative, it is to be taken in its whole amount. The question is not whether *some* of these particulars would not have been embraced by a *false* Revelation, but whether *all of them in conjunction* may not be looked upon as a presumptive evidence of a *true* one. This we affirm to be the case; and till some false religion shall be adduced which comprises all these probabilities, without errors and absurdities sufficiently powerful to counteract them, the argument must be admitted as valid, or the entire force of circumstantial and presumptive evidence must be denied.

Perhaps it may seem to demand an apology, that *some* of these probabilities could hardly have occurred to the mind, if they had not been echoed by the experience of a particular Revelation. To a certain extent we are willing to grant the truth of this observation. But as we have before remarked *, it is not an objection to the *force*, but to the *form* of our argument. To show

* See Introduction, Part I.

the consistency of Christianity with right reason, and with the wants and demands of nature, it is sufficient that we can perceive its reasonableness and propriety *after* it has been made known. In this, as in many other respects, Revelation agrees entirely with natural theology, the arguments of which are by no means self-apparent, nor to be elicited without much study and observation.

The fact is this—for the sake of our argument we have been obliged to place ourselves in an *ideal* situation, as if we had never heard of Christianity. This is like a legal fiction that we may afterwards arrive at an important truth. But the fiction does not in any degree affect the reality of our conclusion; for whether these particulars could have been foreseen or no, independently of Revelation, (a question which cannot be ascertained with minute precision,) still it is equally clear and certain that they are at present approved and ratified by our judgments.

But it is of far greater consequence to repeat, that we do not pretend by these

arguments to demonstrate the *truth* of Christianity, but merely to display its *presumptive* evidence. Some of these arguments are little more than collations of corresponding difficulties, or merely *negative* agreements between the works and the word of God. These are intended to humble that arrogance which would demand a more complete knowledge of things spiritual and eternal, than that which we now possess of things temporal and material. In others, we adduce various degrees of *positive* resemblance; some of which are only slight analogies, and some amounting to a full and satisfactory proof of a unity of workmanship and design. But whether slight or powerful, they all tend to produce one general effect; the force of the argument consists in its *complexity*; and to estimate this force with accuracy, we must consider the number and multiplicity, the minuteness and the connection of its component parts.

The same remarks, which an excellent author* has applied to the principles of

* See Stewart's Outlines of Moral Philosophy, p. 238.

natural religion, will also apply to the various particulars which compose our argument. "They all hang together in such a manner, that if one of them be granted, it facilitates the way for the reception of the rest. Nor is it merely with each other that these principles are connected. They have a relation to all the other principles of moral philosophy; insomuch that a person who entertains just views of the one, never fails to entertain just views of the other. Perhaps it would not be going too far to assert, that they have a relation to almost all the truths we know in the moral, the intellectual, and the material worlds. One thing is certain, that, in proportion as our knowledge extends, our doubts and objections disappear, new light is continually breaking in upon us from every quarter, and more of order and system and design appear in the universe."

To enable the reader to judge with greater facility of the extent and complexity of this *incidental* connection between different parts of the work, numerous references are subjoined, by which every one will be enabled

to perceive the force and consistency of the general argument. But to catch the combined result of so many conspiring particulars, it is necessary that these references should be examined with care and attention. Hence we submit our labours to the public, rather as materials for thinking, than as professing to offer a finished and complete composition. They are hints and suggestions to awaken the thoughts and meditations of others: where they fail of producing this effect, they fail of all their advantages. It is but a sketch and an outline, to be filled up by the care and assiduity of the reader.

At the conclusion of these remarks, the author would beg leave to direct the attention of the public towards the bearing of this argument, as it tends to counteract the prevailing errors of Antinomian enthusiasm. It is too much the fashion of the present age, amongst those of orthodox sentiments, to decry the use of reason in matters of religion, and to state the doctrines of Revelation as if they were merely *positive* and *arbitrary* appointments. Perhaps this nar-

row and mistaken view of Christian Theology may have arisen originally from a desire to oppose the contrary errors of some of our eminent divines of the last century ; who, it must be allowed, were too much inclined to magnify the powers of reason, and to speak of natural religion as a separate and independent system. But it is the object of the present work to strike out a middle road between these opposite extremes ; to state natural Theology, not as *independent*, but as *associated* with revealed religion ; and thus to combine the doctrines of the Gospel with the powers and principles of the human mind. It is the general result and tendency of our work to show, that though human reason be not sufficiently strong to *discover* truth by its native and unassisted powers, yet that it is able to *approve* and to *recognise* it, when it is laid before it with proper authority. “ The only view of antiquity,” says Warburton, “ which gives solid advantage to the Christian cause, is such a one as shows natural reason to be *clear* enough to *perceive* truth, and the necessity of its deductions when proposed ;

but not generally *strong* enough to *discern* it and draw right deductions from it." *Div. Legat.* Book III. sect. v. "If some," continues the same profound writer, "have allowed too little to natural religion, there are others who have ascribed a great deal too much to it: systems which, however different, are alike injurious to the great truth which they profess to defend. The one, by annihilating natural religion, cut away the ground and foundations of Christianity; the other, by giving to natural religion certain doctrines of perfection to which it doth not pretend, overturn the superstructure." Book IX. ch. i. p. 77.

SECTION I.

Is it not possible that the Christian Revelation may be true ?

THE possibility of a Divine Revelation in *general* being admitted *, it will follow that the Christian Revelation in *particular* may be true, supposing it to contain nothing which is derogatory to the nature and attributes of God, or which is plainly contradictory, and therefore impossible for infinite power to effect. That the belief of Christianity does not *necessarily* imply the admission of any such absurdity or contradiction, is in the highest degree probable from the reception which it had met with in the world. It would be scarcely possible that a Religion which thus bore the marks of its own condemnation, should have prospered amongst the most learned and civilized nations ; and that individuals of the greatest talents and virtues should have been deluded into its belief. A gross and palpable

* See Part I. Sect. 1.

imposture which violated all the principles of reason, and of Natural Religion never could have maintained itself under the governments of modern Europe. It would have become the interest of all legislators to have declared themselves against it ; but such accusations have never been brought against Christianity, because they would be plainly incredible.

The very arguments which have been used against Christianity will show that by some *possibility* it may be true, for who would argue either for or against any thing which it was impossible that mankind should believe ? Such a Religion may be false, but its falsity cannot be of that nature which implies its utter impossibility, it cannot shock the common sense and understandings of Mankind. That Christianity may possibly be true, however unlikely, is, I apprehend, either formally or tacitly admitted by all those who have written against it.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 47.]

SECTION II.

*Is it not desirable that the Christian Revelation should be true? **

HOWEVER any man may be disposed to doubt concerning the truth of Christianity considered as matter of *fact* and of *history*, it is not possible to deny that if it were true, it would be for the general benefit and advantage of mankind. It cannot be esteemed as a matter of indifference, for example, whether the whole world has been redeemed by the Son of God. Every one must be left to form his own opinions respecting the truth or the falsity of the doctrine; but no one could assert, that if the truth of the doctrine were established, it would not be of the utmost importance to our happiness, and a discovery in which the whole human race would not be most deeply interested. The same reasoning will apply to each of the other doctrines of Christianity in *particular*, and

* See Part I. Sect. 2.

to their *aggregate* amount as forming one entire and connected system.

But when we have allowed not only the possibility, but the *importance* of this Revelation, we lie under the strongest obligations to enquire into its truth. It is an offence against reason and against natural religion, not to enter into a serious investigation of the argument. Indeed, as we have already remarked, the extreme importance and desirableness of such Revelation, ought to be esteemed as a presumptive symptom in its favour, as adding something to the previous hypothesis of its abstract possibility ; since it is evident, that if any Revelation has been given by God to man, it would appear to us of the utmost importance to human happiness.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 48.]

SECTION III.

*Do not the Scriptural Accounts of Revelation accord with the teachable State of our Faculties, and with the existing Phenomena of the Human Mind ? **

MAN, upon his first creation, according to the Scriptures, was instructed in his religious duties by God himself. The sacred writings go all along upon the supposition that the first religion was the effect of Divine Revelation, not the slow and dubious result of reasoning. They represent man as created with faculties to approve and perceive the force of its truth when brought before his mind ; not that he was born with innate knowledge, or that he had the power of inventing truth independent of instruction.

Now, whether the truth of this account be allowed or no, concerning the original creation of man, it must at least be esteemed

* See Part I. Sect. 3.

a probable and consistent relation, because it accords, upon the whole, with the present state of our faculties, in which some degree of communicated knowledge appears to be essentially necessary to our advancement in moral and religious truth.

But when, according to the same Scriptures, the faculties and conditions of men became afterwards deteriorated, it pleased God to give him another Revelation of his will, adapted to his altered situation. Now, whatever might be the state of our faculties on the former supposition, we are able to form a decided opinion concerning them, as they are supposed to have been when this second Revelation was given, because it is represented as the very same state in which they now are.

Under these circumstances, the Scriptures describe man as unable to invent a religion for himself; but as still able to approve of what is taught him on divine authority; and as possessed of competent powers to investigate the evidence of such a religion. They inform us, that this Revelation was for many ages confined chiefly

to a particular people, amongst whom it was kept up by frequent miracles ; but that the rest of mankind gradually lost its memory ; and that, for want of a sufficiently authorised standard to guide their opinions, they fell into the grossest errors and idolatries. *Query.* Do not these accounts accord with our knowledge of heathen antiquity ?

The same Scriptures assert, that at length it pleased God to republish this Revelation on a more extended and comprehensive scale, to adapt it to the common circumstances of mankind, and to join with its peculiar doctrines, the precepts of a most pure and sublime morality.

Now, although it is not to be expected that any man should give his assent to the truth of the Christian Revelation till he has fully satisfied himself of its historical veracity ; yet, if this be a fair account of these Revelations, which are contained in the Scriptures, we may appeal to our opponents whether there be any thing in the supposition of their probable truth, which is in any degree absurd. Do not they appear suited to the state of our rational

faculties? Is there any likelihood that a rude people, devoid of all traditional knowledge, and cut off from all intercourse with the rest of mankind, would ever arrive at the knowledge of the true God, or reason out for themselves a consistent theory of religion? Is there not plainly wanted in matters of Theology, a line to separate truth from mere speculation? and can this line be drawn by any thing less than Divine authority?

The following quotation from Seneca will illustrate the general reasoning which has been here employed: *Boni honestique notitiam nos docere natura non potuit; semina nobis scientiae dedit, scientiam non dedit. Nobis videtur observatio collegisse, et rerum sœpe factarum inter se collatio per analogiam nostro intellectu, et honestum et bonum judicante.* Epist. 120.

SECTION IV.

Is it any Objection to the Christian Revelation, that it is founded on the Evidence of Miracles?

HAVING shewn * that we can form no conception of a Divine Revelation which is not made known to us in a *supernatural* manner, and the chief and distinguishing evidence of which does not arise from external miracles addressed to the senses, it ought rather to be esteemed a presumptive argument in favour of Christianity, than as any objection against it, that it professes to have furnished us with the *only* kind of evidence by which the truth of any Revelation can be established.

That a miracle in itself implies no contradiction is plain, from the consideration that it is necessarily included in our conception of a Revelation, the possible truth

* Part I. Sect. 4.

of which has been already admitted. But if a Revelation itself be possible, it cannot *necessarily* contain under it any contradiction; — a contradiction not being an object of power, and therefore implying a direct impossibility.

Another proof of the possibility of miracles, which is less dependent on abstract reasoning, arises out of the popular persuasion of mankind in all ages respecting their existence. Now, although this be not any sufficient proof that they have *actually* occurred, yet it is full and sufficient proof that they *may* have occurred, *i. e.* that they involve no direct contradiction or impossibility. For how could any opinions become universally prevalent, the very supposition of which was absurd and incredible?

Another argument for the credibility of miracles arises out of the impossibility of tracing any necessary or immutable relations between secondary causes and their effects. There is no connecting link, as far as we can discern, between any physical

cause and its attendant consequence beyond that of the positive will of the Creator, that the one should constantly precede, and the other should constantly follow. Hence all our philosophy must be limited by facts and experience. But if every physical effect depends on the will of the Creator, it is but in the nature of a positive appointment ; and the same authority which made the appointment can at any time suspend or revoke it. Whoever then argues for the impossibility of miracles, should first demonstrate the eternal and immutable relations of physical phenomena to each other. But this philosophy would prove equally at variance with faith and with reason ; for it would contradict all the principles of experimental science, as well as subvert all the doctrines of Natural Theology.

After this view of the question, we ask, whether the miraculous evidence of the Christian religion does not bear a manifest reference to the constitution of the human mind, as corresponding to our ab-

stract conceptions of that particular species of evidence by which *alone* any Revelation could be authenticated, in connection with reason?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 50.]

SECTION V.

*Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from its Agreement with the Circumstances of Mankind? **

IT has been remarked, that the evidence of miracles is precisely the same kind of evidence as that which is ordinarily addressed to our senses; and that the belief of miracles, when reported to us upon testimony, is precisely the same kind of assent as that upon which the whole fabric of history depends. Hence we have deduced the probability, that if any Revelation were afforded to mankind, it would accord with the existing state of their moral faculties, and that it would, in its general character, bear some resemblance to the course of Providence.

Now this is what we assert may be discovered in Christianity, when it is soberly and dispassionately compared with our moral

* See Part I, Sect. 5.

faculties, and with the state of the world around us. The one is made to correspond to the other, so as to conduce to its plan and its purposes: they preserve a mutual relation, so that the one reflects light and evidence upon the other. Even in their difficulties, there is a degree of resemblance and proportion, that kind of general harmony and effect, which intimates that they may have proceeded from the same author, and may be intended for the same end, since they are carried on with a degree of intercourse which admits of their mutual illustration.

For the full proof of these positions, we must refer to the numerous examples which are brought forward in the present work; but it may be proper, on the present occasion, to mention the following striking particulars.

First, it is matter of plain and indisputable fact, that the morality of the New Testament is essentially the same as that which the wisest moralists and legislators have ever inculcated; that there is not a single moral duty prescribed by the Gospel, which is not approved of by reason, and

which is not favourable to human happiness; and that, even in its most mysterious doctrines, it still bears a manifest reference to our active virtues.

Secondly, it cannot be questioned, that, whether this Religion be true or false, it is most intimately connected with the passions and affections of mankind; that it appeals to our hopes and fears, bespeaks our love, pity, and gratitude, and that it leaves not untouched any motive, whether pathetic, sublime, or self-interested, which may bring us to co-operate with its purposes.

Thirdly, it must also be admitted, that the author of Christianity has proposed his religion to the universal acceptance of all classes of society, but that it is addressed in a particular manner to the poor. Now if Christianity had not the principles of human nature upon its side, it could not have received the support and acceptance of those who are chiefly animated with *natural* sentiments. Perhaps the peculiar mode of teaching which Jesus adopted, his frequent parables, and his continual allusions to the material world, might prove even something still more definite. The same observation

will apply to the other parts of the New Testament. Thus St. Paul confutes the objections of those who denied the possibility of a Resurrection, by appealing to our experience of nature in the ordinary course of vegetation.

Again, there are marks of this correspondence to nature, discoverable in the peculiar character of the founder of Christianity ; “ who was, in all respects, made like unto us, sin only excepted ; ” “ who took not upon himself the nature of angels, but who took upon him the seed of Abraham.” Had some *celestial spirit* been selected as the herald of our religion, we could not have accounted for this warm sympathy with the sentiments of our nature : but this difficulty is removed, when we remember that the author and finisher of the Christian faith resembled us in all the innocent emotions of humanity ; and that “ he submitted even to be tempted, that he might have the power and compassion to succour those who are tempted.”

Lastly, the history of Christianity, in its temporal effects upon society, demonstrates

that it is admirably suited to the character of man, to the constitution of the world, and to the general civilization of the species. Whether it be true or false in its *divine* pretensions, even its enemies have allowed it to possess this salutary influence on our *social* intercourse. But if this is allowed, it must be analogous to the principles of reason, and associated with the tendencies of God's moral government; for whatever, upon the whole, leads to the advancement of human happiness and knowledge, must be consonant to the noblest principles of our nature, and must harmonise with the existing constitution of the world.

'It should be remembered, however, that we do not adduce these facts, as if they positively proved the *truth* of the Christian Revelation; but merely as corresponding to our general anticipations, that, *if* any Revelation were given, it would act in unison and connection with the government of Providence, and in accordance with our moral sentiments. This, I apprehend, is as far as the argument can be applied, with re-

lation to those who do not previously admit the truth of Christianity. But to those who do admit it, yet who seek to divorce it from reason and nature, these reflections may be esteemed as a full and satisfactory proof of their dangerous errors and misconceptions ; a proof, not depending upon the interpretation of a few dark and dubious passages of scripture, but drawn out of the vitals of its system, and arising from the whole scope and genius and tenor of the Christian dispensation.

There are two books, as Bacon remarks, which have been laid before mankind for their earnest study and attention ; “ the Scriptures, which reveal the will of God, and the Creation, which declares his power; whereof the latter is a key unto the former.”* “ As to the explanation of mysteries, we find that God himself condescends to the weakness of our capacity, and opens his mysteries, so that they may be best understood by us ; *inoculating*, as it were, his Revelations into the notions and compreh-

* De Augment. Scient. vol. i. p. 64.

hensions of our reason.”* “But the capital precept,” as the same author excellently observes, “is this, that the eye of the mind be never taken off from things themselves ; but receive their images truly as they are. And God forbid that we should ever offer the dreams of fancy for a model of the world ; but rather, through the divine favour, should write a revelation and real view of the stamps and signatures of the Creator upon the creatures.”†

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 51.]

* De Augment. Scient. vol. ii. p. 296. † Vol. i. p. 30.

SECTION VI.

*Is it not to this Revelation that we owe our settled Opinions respecting the Origin and Creation of the World? **

IN our modern systems of Natural Theology, it is usual to deduce our obligations to God from considering him as the intelligent Maker of the universe. That our earth was created within a definite period of time, is an hypothesis which is now generally admitted; and no doubts are entertained by Theists that the present system of Nature has not existed from eternity. But the truth of this assumption was by no means generally acknowledged amongst the ancient Theists; none of whom, according to Mosheim, admitted the possibility that even Almighty Power could create any thing without some pre-existing substance.

Such being the result of their enquiries concerning the creation, we may reasonably

* See Part I. Sect. 6.

deduce the necessity that some farther light was required, beyond what reason and philosophy could furnish, to ascertain the primitive origination of mankind, together with the date and origin of the material world. This light could have been imparted to us only through the medium of a Revelation from the Author of nature. With this aid, we not only can discern the credibility of this hypothesis, but we can demonstrate the absurdity of every other ; though, if we had been left to the mere deductions of reason, it would appear as if the conception of a creation *ex nihilo*, were too bold a speculation for the most lofty genius to entertain. So just is the opinion of an inspired writer, that it is “*through faith* we understand the worlds “ were made by the power of God ; and “ that the objects of the visible creation “ were made out of things which do not “ appear ;” *i. e.* without any pre-existing matter, and solely by the will and wisdom of the Almighty Creator.

Such being now the acknowledged basis of Natural Theology, it must be granted, as

no slight presumption in favour of Revelation, that it professes to have furnished us with the only sure and indubitable evidence on which such information can be founded; *viz.* upon that testimony which proceeds immediately from the Divine Being. As to the internal credibility of this doctrine, it is apparent from its being generally received as an article of rational Theism.

Query. May we not trace to this discovery of Revelation, much of that clearness and precision which distinguish our modern systems of natural and moral science from those mystical conceits which so universally mingled with the speculations of the ancients, on account of their ignorance of those data on which all sound and intelligible interpretations of nature must proceed? Could any clear or definite conceptions be entertained concerning the *laws* of nature, till it was ascertained that those laws were the operations of an intelligent mind; not the blind results of necessity, nor the capricious evolutions of chance?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 52.]

SECTION VII.

*Is there not some Credibility derived to Christianity from its Connection with an Account of our Creation in a State of Innocence ? **

WE have already had occasion to remark, that it seems extremely *natural* reasonable beings should have some account rendered to them of their origin, and of the first creation of that world in which they live. We have also remarked, that it is in a high degree probable, the whole human race should have sprung from a *single pair* of progenitors ; and that unless we suppose them to have been created in a state of *innocence* and *virtue*, we cannot clear up the moral attributes of the Deity, nor establish the obligations of natural religion on a sure and satisfactory foundation.

Now, these are considerations which possess some degree of abstract probability, previously to all enquiries into the authen-

* See Part I. Sect. 6 and 7.

ticity of the Mosaic history. As an hypothesis, it is like that of Copernicus before its demonstration by Newton, deserving of some attention for its beautiful simplicity, and for its conformability to the operations of nature. But since it is notorious, that unless the Scriptural records of the creation be received as authentic, there are no others to which we can appeal with any appearance of truth ; then whatever force there be in the previous probability,—that some account of the creation would have been afforded to us,—this force is concentrated on the *only* account which is in any degree credible.

That man was originally created innocent, is a doctrine not only admitted by Christianity, but it forms the *substratum* of its whole Revelation : whatever credibility therefore is contained in this abstract supposition, must be transferred to the account of our religion. And thus the amount of *all* these probabilities is to be thrown into the scale of the Christian Revelation ; there being no other religion in the world, besides the Jewish, which presents us with

a credible history of the origin of our species, or of the creation of our world in such a state as would not appear derogatory to the divine attributes.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 53.]

SECTION VIII.

*Is there not some Credibility derived to Christianity from its Connection with an Account of our Fall from a State of Innocence? **

If there be any credibility in the supposition that man was originally created innocent, there must also be an equal credibility belonging to the Scripture doctrine of the Fall; because, as it is matter of plain experience that he is not *now* innocent, so, upon this supposition, he must have lost this innocence at some period *subsequent* to his original creation.

But in addition to this argument, we have also remarked several plain intimations both of internal and external nature, that he is now in a fallen and degraded condition. † Perhaps the phenomenon of *war* would be alone sufficient to justify such a suspicion. Indeed, the fact, to whatever cause it might be attributed, seems always to have

* See Part I. Sect. 7.

† See Part I. Sect. 8, 9, 10.

been taken for granted, under every form of natural religion. The worship of man, in all ages and countries, has been the worship of a creature conscious of having offended his Maker, and desirous to deprecate his displeasure by cries for mercy and attempts to atone for his misconduct. But if man had been persuaded that God had originally created him sinful and inclined to evil, I know not how we could have accounted for such sentiments without a manifest absurdity. Can any creature *repent* of being what God had originally made him, and had intended him to be?

Now, Christianity, in connection with Judaism, gives us an intelligible history of that *degraded* condition in which we at present are. It furnishes us with a brief, yet consistent narrative, that man by the abuse of his free agency fell into vice and misery from a previous state of holiness and happiness. Whether this account, considered *historically*, be regarded as true or false, it must at least be granted to be a *possible* and intelligible explanation of things as we now find them. Nor is it any objection

against this account, that it proceeds on the supposition of an *hereditary* principle, since the same principle has been shown to be extensively active amidst all the operations of nature. *

It should be considered, then, that apart from all considerations of historical truth, there appears to be something probable and consonant to reason in the Scriptural account of the fall of man from a state of innocence. It brings before us the essential holiness of God, whilst it explains to us both the dignity and the debasement of our own nature. It offers us so plain an account of the origin of evil, that whether we receive it as fact or fiction, we must allow it to be a *possible* solution of a difficulty which is otherwise totally inexplicable.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 54.]

* See Part I. Sect. 11.

SECTION IX.

*Is not Man described in the New Testament according to his present Moral Character? **

UPON this question the whole application of our argument depends. If man be treated by Christianity either as better or worse than we actually find him, there can be no connection between natural and revealed theology, and we must contrast, rather than combine such opposite systems.

It is matter of plain fact, however, that man is delineated in the New Testament just as we find him sketched by philosophers, exhibited by historians, and experienced by ourselves. A being neither faultlessly good nor totally depraved; one who has strong inclinations both towards vice and virtue; who has a civil war raging in his faculties, “the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit lusting against the flesh.”

* See Part I. Sect. 16.

The world is depicted as the debatable ground on which good and evil spirits are actively engaged in attempting to ruin or to rescue mankind. He is represented as having suffered a violent shock in his moral constitution, which has destroyed the balance of his passions and corrupted the purity of his nature. In this situation, *penitence* is recommended to him as his best preservation against temptation; whilst *hope* is afforded of his being pardoned through the mercy of God revealed to him through Jesus Christ.

The whole system of Redemption goes upon the supposition, that though weak and unable of ourselves to help ourselves, yet that we have some *capacities* which may enable us to embrace the grace of God when it is propounded to us. All its exhortations, its reproofs, its hopes and threatenings, are addressed to creatures, who, though greatly injured in their moral faculties, are not entirely devoid of reflection. The Gospel is a strong appeal to beings who are surrounded with dangers, but who are not utterly desperate; it describes us as

very far gone from our original innocence, but it nowhere denies that we can perceive the essential superiority of virtue to vice.

Now, whatever may be thought of the truth of Christianity as a Divine Revelation, no man can assert that this description of human nature doth not correspond with history and experience. It is matter of daily observation, and of personal consciousness, that we are such beings as are here delineated ; that we are alternately impelled by the conflicting powers of good and evil ; that the spirit is willing and the flesh is weak ; that we often admire what we cannot execute, and approve of that virtue which we cannot perform.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 55.]

SECTION X.

*Is not the present State of Man and his Condition in the World, suited to such a Religion as the Christian? **

“ ONE thing,” as Butler has observed from Origen, “ is set over against another. Our nature corresponds to our external condition ; without this correspondence, there would be no possibility of any such thing as human life and human happiness, which life and happiness are therefore the result of our nature and condition conjointly.”

Although this observation is here applied in its strict and literal sense as relating to the analogy of natural Religion with the course of Providence ; yet it may with equal propriety be extended to the Christian Revelation. Suppose either the nature of man or our condition in the world be essentially different from what they now are, and this Religion could not have been addressed to us. Had we been much better or much

* See Part I. Sect. 5.

worse in our moral characters, we could not have become the subjects of such a dispensation. If we had been much better, this assistance would not have been required; if we had been much worse, we should not have been capable of receiving it.

Or suppose that the world had been very differently constituted from what it now is, and it could not have been the theatre wherein this Religion could have appeared. It is a state of moral discipline, in which there are rewards and punishments, severe trials, and yet numerous alleviations, a dubious appearance of light and shade, much uncertainty, and considerable knowledge; it is that very state, in short, which has filled philosophers with doubts and difficulties, in which only such a Religion as the Christian could have appeared.

Had all the scenes of life been pleasant and triumphant, it would not have been possible to have made any advances in Christian doctrines. “It is through much tribulation that we must enter into the kingdom of God.” The same necessity

which is laid upon us for securing our *temporal* happiness by the restraint of our passions, insensibly conduces to our progress in *spiritual* piety. Or had all the scenes of life been adverse and gloomy, had we been weighed down with perpetual sorrows and disappointments, we could not then have raised our drooping heads to the prospects of eternity. These *overwhelming* afflictions would have destroyed the anticipations of faith and hope.

Out of numberless particulars, select only the shortness and uncertainty of life. Now imagine any considerable alteration in this respect, and Christianity could not have been addressed to man. It is a state of casualty, of alarm, of vicissitude, which forms the vital atmosphere of our Religion.

“ Of all views,” says Paley, “ under which human life hath ever been considered, the most reasonable is that which regards it as a state of *probation*.” Now it is upon this ground that Christianity hath constructed her entire system. She has every where pre-supposed our admission of this great doctrine of Natural Theology. It is

blended with all her delineations of the present, and with all her prospects of the future.

The only difference which I can perceive in this respect between the views of natural and of revealed Religion is this, that whereas a state of trial and suffering *, such as we are placed in, seems to pre-suppose on our part some degree of *guilt* and *unworthiness*, Christianity informs by what means we have contracted this guilt, and *how* we were brought into this state of suffering, whilst this phenomenon is left totally unaccounted for by Natural Theology. That we *are* in such a state is acknowledged equally by both. It is a fact so engraved upon human life, and so associated with the government of Providence, that we can find no escape from its belief, but by rushing into universal scepticism.

“ These views of human nature,” as an excellent author observes, “ are not only justified, but decidedly confirmed by the Scriptures. The mind is there represented

* See Part I. Sect. 11.

as possessed of talents entrusted to its use, of which an account is to be rendered hereafter. Human life is declared to be a state of discipline in which the various faculties of mankind are to be exerted, and their moral characters formed, tried and confirmed, previously to their entering on a future and higher existence for which they are destined, and in which the final condition of every individual will be proportioned to the use which he has made of his talents and opportunities in this preparatory stage. Life is therefore with great propriety described as a race in which a prize is contended for, or as a season for sowing the seed of a future and immortal harvest, as a warfare in which the combatants must arm themselves with all the virtues, and employ them with zealous courage and enduring patience that they may be fitted to partake hereafter of the glories of an eternal triumph.” *

These observations whilst they show the wisdom of Christianity as being adapted to

* Sumner's Records of the Creation, Vol. ii. p. 24.

the present state and circumstances of mankind, also evince how closely it is allied to the opinions of moralists and legislators respecting that situation in which we are placed. Since it cannot be denied that this is the usual language of Natural Theology concerning our experience and situations as men, it ought to be esteemed a presumptive argument in favour of Revelation, that it depicts us as Christians under similar colours ; that it not only admits the reality of these delineations, but that in all its precepts and doctrines, its promises and threatenings, it is founded on the supposition of their truth.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 56.]

SECTION XI.

*Does not Christianity acquire some Credibility from its having established the Belief of the Divine Unity ? **

THAT the Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament assert, in the most direct and positive manner, the strict unity of the Divine Being, is allowed by all Christians, however they may differ in their interpretations of particular passages. Whatever difficulties we may find in our conceptions of the doctrines of the Unity, we feel obliged to acknowledge this doctrine in perfect consistence with the Unity of God. It cannot, then, be equitable to urge that as an objection against the Revelation itself, which arises entirely out of the imperfections of our own faculties.

But what still further evinces the force of our argument is this, that Revelation hath

* See Part I. Sect. 20.

in fact been the great medium, both in ancient and modern times, of upholding in the world the belief of the Unity of the Divine Being. That it was so in antiquity, is plain from the history of the Jews, when compared to that of all other nations, whether barbarous or civilized. And that the same effect hath followed from the publication of Christianity, is still more apparent in consequence of its wider diffusion. In this respect, even those immense regions which own the doctrines of Mahomet are *indirectly* obliged to Revelation. And thus it cannot be doubted that, whether Christianity be true or false, it has proved the most efficacious instrument of establishing this great doctrine of Natural Theology; and that its influence on this subject has been far superior to all the efforts of reason and philosophy.

But when a sincere *Theist* has made these admissions, it surely becomes him to enquire into the credentials of such a dispensation. If he acknowledges the doctrine of a Providence, let him seriously consider whether, upon his own principles of reli-

gious belief, it is probable that the most important doctrine of Natural Theology would have been consigned to the protection of a *fable* and *imposture*?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 57.]

SECTION XII.

*Is there not a Universal Agreement in Natural and Revealed Theology respecting the Attributes of God? **

THOUGH we are furnished by Christianity with a far *clearer* and more *consistent* account of the divine attributes than could have been drawn up by our natural faculties, yet it does not appear to discover to us any attribute which is altogether *new* and *original*, or any which was before *entirely* unknown. As the power, wisdom, mercy, and goodness of God had all in some degree been revealed to us by the works of creation, so the eternity of his nature, and the immutability of his justice, had been deduced from the principles of reason.

Without dwelling needlessly upon each of these attributes, let us consider these observations as they respect the love and the justice of God.

“ That God is love,” is asserted in Scripture, and has been acknowledged by thou-

* See Part I. Sect. 20.

sands who never heard the tidings of Christianity. It is the favourite attribute which beams throughout creation ; but it glows with still brighter majesty in the system of redemption. The views of Natural Theology, as they respect that goodness of the Creator, which is over all his works, seem to tally and correspond with those delineations of his mercy which prompted him to rescue his creatures from eternal ruin. If we were treated always harshly and cruelly under Providence, there would not exist the same *resemblance* and *connection* that we are now pointing out.

But, upon the other hand, neither the systems of nature nor grace will warrant us in depicting the character of the Deity as that of blind benevolence, devoid of rectitude and of moral justice. In nature, He is evidently a moral governor, the rewarder of virtue and the punisher of vice. There is severity as well as mercy discoverable in the administration of Providence ; a severity which brings down the most tremendous penalties on those who will not conform to the moral laws of nature.

Now, marks of the same administration are clearly discoverable in the gospel, the whole scheme of which is built upon the mercy and the justice of God, acting in concert and conjunction. The pardon which is offered, is offered to those who truly repent of their sins ; but the severest denunciations are held out against the profligate and impenitent. Nay, the pardon which is granted, is granted through the medium of a suffering Redeemer ; and thus, as Bishop Porteus beautifully expresses it, “ we tremble at God’s justice, even while we are within the arms of his mercy.”

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 58.]

SECTION XIII.

Is it any Objection to Christianity that it discovers to us some new Views of the Divine Nature?

WE have remarked *, that, on the supposition of any Revelation, it was highly probable we should be instructed in some new facts relating to the Deity, but which did not contradict our previous notions respecting his goodness, or any of the divine attributes. It was also observed, that, in all probability, these discoveries would be made with the utmost plainness, free from all metaphysical subtleties, and rendered, in some degree, tangible and intelligible by their effects.

Now, that such is the fact with respect to Christianity, is evident from considering that it is the leading object of this Revelation to describe the Deity by those *rela-*

* See Part I. Sect. 21.

tions in which he stands to us, rather than by attempting to lay before us his *abstract* and *essential* nature. As our *Father*, God was indeed, in some degree, the object of that worship which was already paid by natural religion ; but his relation to us, as *Redeemer* and *Sanctifier*, could not apparently have been made known to us, but through the medium of Christianity. As soon as these relations are made known, we perceive our obligations to be strictly of a moral kind, the whole difference, as Bishop Butler remarks, between these relations and the former, consisting in this, that the first are discoverable by our natural reason, whilst the others are not discoverable but by some extraordinary Revelation.

“ It is one of the advantages,” says Paley, “ of the Revelations which we acknowledge, that whilst they reject idolatry, with its many pernicious accompaniments, they introduce the Deity to human apprehensions under an idea more *personal*, more determinate, more within its compass, than the Theology of nature can do. And this they do, by representing Him exclusively under

the relation in which he stands to ourselves, and for the most part, under some plain character resulting from that relation, or from the history of his providences. This method suits the span of our intellect much better than the universality which enters into the idea of God, as deduced from the sources of nature. When, therefore, these representations are well founded, in point of authority, (for all depends upon that,) they afford a condescension to the state of our faculties, of which they who have most reflected on the subject will be the first to acknowledge the want and value." *Natural Theology*, ch. 23. p. 448.

N. B. It is the object of these reflections to show that the Scriptures have *represented* God chiefly after a relative manner, not to insinuate, in any degree, that the doctrine of the Trinity may be understood as implying nothing more than the relative manifestations of the Deity.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 59.]

SECTION XIV.

Is not the Deity made known to us in Revealed Theology, chiefly after a relative and analogical Manner?

WE have remarked * that all our conceptions of God, his nature, and his attributes, as made known by reason and as described in the language of natural religion, are *symbolic analogies* drawn from the reflections of our own minds, and from the relations in which we stand towards each other, and afterwards applied with a partial and yet real reference to the Divine perfections.

Now, the Scriptures have not only adopted this language of natural theology, by commonly speaking of God after a similar manner, but Christianity has made use of the same relative and symbolical style, in those peculiar manifestations of the Deity upon which the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel depend. When this Revela-

* See Part I. Sect. 22.

tion describes the Godhead as consisting of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit — our Maker, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier — it employs the very same *style* which we have already remarked as prevailing over natural theology, only that this style is here rendered still more definite and precise. And thus all the offices of Christ are described after the same analogical manner. Whether He is mentioned as the Mediator betwixt God and Man, or as an Advocate and Intercessor, our High-Priest, our Ransom and propitiatory Sacrifice, still there is the same reference to the facts and circumstances of human nature. These offices and characters are delineated under ideas which are borrowed from things below, and which there are made use of as “the patterns of the things in the Heavens.”

If there be any force in these remarks, they will show how false and frivolous are those objections which are frequently brought against Christianity for its describing the Deity after a figurative and relative manner. Had there been no other answer, it would have been sufficient to reply, that it makes

use of the very same language as that which is employed by natural theology, and that it appears to be the only channel by which such an imperfect creature as man could have been made acquainted with these divine mysteries. But when we are informed by Revelation, that man was made “after the image of God,” we can gain something like a glimpse into the foundations of this sublime philosophy; we can conceive of the truth and reality of that connection between things divine and human, on which these relative and analogical representations depend.

Query. May we not from such views obtain a more clear and philosophic perception of the *typical* representations of the Old Testament?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 60.]

SECTION XV.

Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from its Appointment of a Mediator betwixt God and Man ?

We have remarked, that, on the supposition of any Revelation *, the office and character of a Mediator seem to be almost necessarily implied. How this office and character should be supported, it might not be possible to determine; but that some mediation, *i. e.* the intervention of some superior intelligence, should take place, this it seems natural to expect in any Revelation of God to reasonable beings.

The same fact is also rendered highly probable from the whole course and construction of nature, in which there is a general mediation carried on; so that we derive most of our advantages through the instrumentality of others. “There is a provision made in nature,” says Bishop

* See Part I. Sect. 23.

Butler*, “that all the bad consequences of a man’s actions should not always inevitably follow. Persons may do a great deal themselves towards preventing the bad consequences of their own follies, and still more may be done by themselves together with the assistance of others; their fellow-creatures; which assistance nature requires and prompts us to do.”

In confirmation of this reasoning, it has been observed, that “the generality of the wisest heathens thought it agreeable to reason to make use of subordinate intelligences, demons, or heroes, by whom they put up their prayers to the superior gods, hoping, that by the mediation of those intercessors, the unworthiness of their own persons and the defects of their prayers might be supplied, and that they might obtain such merciful and gracious answers to their prayers, as they could not presume to hope for upon their own account.” †

To grant pardon to sinners through a Mediator is also far more humbling, and,

* See Analogy, Part II. Sect. 5.

† Clarke’s Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 195.

therefore, more beneficial to the penitent, than to grant it immediately to himself. It appears also more for the honour of him who remits the punishment to remit it through the mediation of one who is innocent, than to grant it at once to the guilty. It impresses us with a far livelier notion of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, than if we had received this pardon simply in answer to our prayers.

Indeed, if men would but look into the human mind, and consider the course which is generally pursued when one party of very inferior rank has given just cause of offence to another of superior dignity, they would cease to argue against the Christian doctrine of mediation, as if it bore no correspondence to the principles of reason and to the ordinary experience of human life. For this is the general method in which a reconciliation is usually effected. And though we are ready to grant that these illustrations by no means come up to parallel cases ; and that there is something in the mediation of Christ which far exceeds the range of our conceptions ; yet they are sufficient to

silence all objections to the *principle* of mediation abstractly considered. They manifestly point out the connection of this doctrine with the ordinary operations of our minds ; and though they do not and cannot explain this mystery, yet they show that it is a mystery which retains a similitude to the course and constitution of nature.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 61.]

SECTION XVI.

Does not the miraculous Incarnation of Christ, in some Degree, correspond to the Miracle which must have taken place at the First Creation of Man ?

“ EXCEPT we believe the world to have been eternal,” says Ogden, “ and the race of mankind to have been continued down to this day by an infinite succession, without any beginning at all ; we must be obliged to acknowledge that at least two human persons were brought into being in some way different from that which is now the established course of nature. All persons cannot have been born as men are now. The Redeemer of mankind, therefore, was not the only person who had not two human parents. What once was, might be again, or something equally different from that which is now the object of experience.” *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 150.

N. B. This observation is only intended to show, that upon the common principles

of natural theology, we admit a fact relating to the history of man, which bears some analogy to the miraculous birth of the founder of Christianity, as stated in the Scriptures.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 62.]

SECTION XVII.

Does not the Mediatorial Character of Christ, as drawn in the Scriptures, correspond with the most rational Views which can be entertained concerning this Office?

If we allow the propriety of some Mediator being appointed between God and man, (a supposition which is almost necessarily included in the idea of any Revelation *,) it seems impossible for reason to suggest, or for imagination to feign, any character so complete and appropriate as that which is sustained by the Author of Christianity as He is represented in the New Testament.

Here is a Being equally related to the Divine and the human natures, with power, excellence, and dignity, which might render his mediation effectual, considered as the work of Omnipotence and Independence; and yet so identified with those whom he

* See Part I. Sect. 23.

came to rescue, that he might sympathise with all their infirmities, and be touched with the feeling of their wants. Now that this character comes up to our notions of a complete Mediator, is matter of self-evident certainty ; and it ought to be allowed to be a presumptive argument in its favour. If our ignorance of the *manner* in which this conjunction of the Divine with the human nature is effected, should be allowed to overturn our sentiments of its moral fitness, then I apprehend that by a parity of reasoning we ought to become universally sceptical, because the “ *nexus*” between cause and effect is universally unknown. The connection between mind and body is at least as mysterious as this connection between a supreme and subordinate intellect, and yet no man doubts of the reality of the former.

The truth is, that upon subjects of this spiritual nature, we cannot look for any thing beyond *moral* evidence ; that we have not faculties to discern any thing beyond the propriety and fitness of God’s dealings with mankind. Thus, if the office of a

Mediator seems to us highly expedient in any Revelation ; and if this office appears to demand a mutual relationship to God and man, it ought not to be urged as any objection to Christianity, that we cannot comprehend the precise mode in which the divine and the human natures are connected. This objection, if pushed to its full extent, is an objection to all our researches into natural and moral science. The evidence which is within our comprehensions is this, that we are in want of such a character ; that our necessities appear to demand it ; that it implies no direct contradiction ; and that, consequently, it may be conceived within the limits of infinite power.

It is precisely on subjects of this nature that it might be supposed we should have received some further information by a Divine Revelation. That mankind have always been disposed to feign some intermediate beings who might act as their intercessors, is a notorious fact ; for it is blended with the universal history of idolatry and Polytheism. This fact, to whatever perverted consequences it may have led, is also a clear

manifestation of the *tendencies* of the human mind. But these tendencies are the result of that constitution which hath been established by the Author of Nature. If, then, the same Author were to republish his will in the form of such a Revelation as that contained in the Scriptures, is it not probable that it would be addressed to those tendencies which he had implanted?

Nor is that infinite condescension of the Deity which is here pre-supposed, any objection to the credibility of this doctrine respecting a Mediator. There are traces of the same condescension, though of far inferior magnitude, discoverable in all the works of Nature. His Providence watches over us at every moment. He takes care of the smallest insect and of the meanest reptile. These are the doctrines of Natural as well as of Revealed Theology. Why, then, should it seem incredible, if, to accomplish certain great and important purposes, respecting man's salvation, He should have stooped to take our nature upon him? Is it not the noblest picture which we can form of his love to represent him as the

Shepherd who came to “ seek and to save his sheep which were lost ? ” Is not there a presumptive argument in favour of these views of Christianity, arising out of the sentiments of human nature ? If the very hairs of our head are numbered ; if not a single sparrow falls to the ground unheeded, (truths which we may learn from the microscope, not less than from the Scriptures,) why should we not believe, that if the union of the divine with the human nature were expedient to save a world of sinners from perishing eternally, the same condescension might be exerted which Christianity assigns to its author ; and which, whether it be true or false, must be allowed to be congenial to the moral hopes and wishes of mankind ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 63.]

SECTION XVIII.

*Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from the singular Character of its Founder?**

IF any well-informed man who had never heard any thing of the Christian religion, were, for the first time, to take up the New Testament, the earliest supposition which would probably enter into his mind might be this — that the character of Jesus, as drawn by the Evangelists, was one of pure imagination, and entirely fictitious. He would conclude, I think, that the whole portrait was the result of a splendid and romantic fancy ; something like that of Cyrus as delineated by Xenophon, or of Telemachus, as feigned by Fenelon ; and he would feel assured, that the writers were endued with the most extraordinary powers of moral judgment and poetical fancy.

But if he had sufficient evidence laid before him that these writers were totally unequal to *invent* such a character, and if

* See Part I. Sect. 23.

from numberless coincidences he was obliged to admit this portrait to have been drawn from life, then, I think, that previous to all minute investigation of the historical evidence on which Christianity is founded, there would arise in his mind a prepossession in favour of that religion which had drawn its origin from such a unique and wonderful personage.

The truth is this, that amidst all the variety of characters which historians and poets and philosophers have left us, there is not one for real originality which approaches to that of Jesus. His divine pretensions ; his manner of teaching ; his supernatural birth ; his profound knowledge of the human mind ; his appeals to prophecy ; his elevated morality ; his sublime doctrines respecting a future life ; his numerous miracles ; the accounts of his death, resurrection, and ascent into Heaven : these particulars are all set forth with an originality, and yet with a plainness and simplicity, to which there is nothing second or similar in the annals of mankind. Let any man turn from the Gospels to the Koran,

and he will perceive the force of these observations.

Now, what we would observe is this, that according to the constitution of the human mind, we are compelled to view such phenomena as collectively forming a presumptive argument in favour of Christianity. There is a bare *possibility*, no doubt, that all this may have been the result of artifice, imposture, and profound duplicity, but still, the *probability* lies on the other side, at least it gives that plausibility to these pretensions which demands investigation. Where there is so much *appearance* of truth, we ought not to consider the subject as if it were undeserving of a serious and candid enquiry.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 64.]

SECTION XIX.

*Is it not a presumptive Evidence in Favour of Christianity that it professes to instruct Mankind by the Example of its Founder, as well as by his Precepts? **

It has been thought the highest commendation of history, that it is philosophy teaching by example; but it is not a less commendation of the Gospel, that it is piety taught after the same practical and personal manner. Christianity is the *only* religion which professes to offer its founder as a sinless and faultless pattern for all to imitate; and I think the boldness and originality of such a profession, combined with the acknowledged utility of this mode of instruction, supposing it to be real, and the apparent ease with which it might be detected, supposing it to be false, gives it on this account alone a fair claim to the attention of reflecting men.

* See Part I. Sect. 24.

Allowing this pattern of its founder to be real, it must be granted to be the most striking and effectual of all methods to discipline and improve its followers. There is, there can be, no authority equal to that of the *example* of the founder of a divine religion. This would be true, even if the author of Christianity had held no other office than that of a teacher sent by God ; but when it is connected with his divine pretensions, and with his character of a *suffering* Redeemer, one who professed “ to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification,” then the force of this example transcends the utmost limit of our conceptions.

But on the other hand, supposing it to be false, it is clearly the most daring and venturesome of all impositions; so much so, that I never recollect to have heard of any impostor who pretended that his life and actions were to be taken as an exact transcript of his doctrines, and who proposed his own example as the test and criterion of his religion. Whilst that humility which consists in a sense of our numerous

imperfections, would prevent an *honest* man from making such presumptuous professions ; the shame and terrors of conviction would operate to hinder *hypocrisy* from proposing such dangerous claims to investigation.

The faultless perfection which is claimed for the life and example of the author of Christianity, whether it be true or false, is a claim which ought to be investigated. If true, it is of inestimable value to human virtue, it is the shortest and readiest of all methods to effect the purposes of a revelation. If false, it admits of plain and palpable detection. It is such a fair and equitable challenge for enquiry, that no man can refuse to examine it.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 65.]

SECTION XX.

Does not Christianity acquire some Credibility from its proposing a Sacrifice and Atonement for our Sins ?

SINCE any Revelation, as we have remarked*, to become suitable and serviceable to mankind, must have contained some doctrines relative to sacrifice and atonement, it ought to be esteemed a presumptive evidence in favour of the Christian Revelation, that it professes to furnish us with some extraordinary discoveries on this subject.

“ If we consult our natural sentiments,” says Adam Smith, “ we are apt to fear lest, before the holiness of God, vice should appear to be more worthy of punishment than the weakness and imperfection of human nature can ever seem to be of reward. Man, when about to appear before a being

* See Part I. Sect. 25.

of infinite perfection, can feel but little confidence in his own merit, or in the imperfect propriety of his own conduct. In the presence of his fellow-creatures, he may often have reason to think highly of his own character and conduct, compared to the still greater imperfections of others. But the case is quite different when about to appear before his Infinite Creator. To such a being, he can scarce imagine that his littleness and weakness should ever seem to be the proper object either of esteem or of reward. But he can easily conceive how the numberless violations of duty, of which he has been guilty, should render him the object of aversion and punishment. Neither can he see any reason why the divine indignation should not be let loose without any restraint upon so vile an insect as he is sensible that he himself must appear to be. If he would still hope for happiness, he is conscious that he cannot demand it from the justice, but that he must entreat it from the mercy of God. Repentance, sorrow, humiliation, contrition at the thoughts of his past conduct, are upon this account the

sentiments which become him, and seem to be the only means which he has left for appeasing the wrath which he knows he has justly provoked. He even distrusts the efficacy of all these, and naturally fears lest the wisdom of God should not, like the weakness of man, be prevailed upon to spare the crime by the most importunate lamentations of the criminal. Some other intercession, some other sacrifice, some other atonement, he imagines must be made for him beyond what he himself is capable of making, before the purity of the divine justice can be reconciled to his manifest offences.

“ The doctrines of Revelation coincide in every respect with these original anticipations of nature ; and as they teach us how little we can depend on the imperfection of our own virtues, so they show us, at the same time, that the most powerful intercession has been made, and the most dreadful atonement has been paid for our manifold transgressions and iniquities.”

Such were the opinions of this eminent writer, when he first published his cele-

brated *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. (See Magee *On the Atonement*, vol. i. p. 209.) They are here cited as affording a fine illustration of the connection of Christianity with the philosophy of the human mind, and as pointing out the relation of its sacrificial doctrines to the principles of reason and the suggestions of conscience.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 66.]

SECTION XXI.

Is not the Doctrine of Spiritual Assistance, as contained in the Scriptures, upon the whole, congenial to the Sentiments of Reason?

THAT good men are under the more immediate influence and protection of the Supreme, and that our minds, not less than our bodies, are under the care of a superintending Providence, has been the support and persuasion of piety in all ages.* The most unlettered savage, who prays to God, virtually takes for granted in his prayers this doctrine of spiritual co-operation.

All that is peculiar to Christianity, on this subject, consists in its attributing such aid and assistance to the more immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, instead of leaving it, as in Natural Theology, to come from the Deity, as known to us by nature. But this, since it depends on a disco-

* See Part I. Sect. 26.

very peculiar to Revelation, can form no difficulty whatever as to the doctrine itself; for if we admit the fact, that the minds of good men are under a divine influence, what difficulty can there be in confining this influence to a particular character of the Deity, which could not have been discovered by reason?

Upon the supposition of any Revelation, it is clear that some discoveries would be made known to us, which we could not have gained from Natural Theology; and it is also probable, as we have remarked, that some of these discoveries would relate more immediately to the Deity. If, then, the doctrine of spiritual aid be a doctrine of natural religion, what could be more likely, that in the event of such Revelation, this doctrine would have been confirmed with greater force, and delineated with greater exactness?

On this head, Christianity has made the smallest possible deviation from the sentiments of natural reason. It is not a change of doctrine, but a discovery of the mode in which this doctrine is brought down to us.

A religious theist believes, that when he prays to God in affliction, he may derive help and consolation from the Author of his being. He believes that his virtues may be aided and strengthened by a divine influence. The Christian acknowledges the same doctrine ; but he attributes this aid more immediately to the Holy Spirit. Revelation has thus gathered up the scattered fragments of natural faith ; and has formed them into an edifice of higher beauty, of juster proportions, and of more solid stability.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 67.]

SECTION XXII.

Is there not some Connection discoverable between the Sufferings of Christ and those ordinary Dealings of Providence which show that Adversity is the School of moral Excellence?

It is the doctrine of Scripture * that there was a certain *propriety* and *fitness* in those trials which Jesus underwent as the high priest and captain of our salvation, that it *became* him to pass through a suffering, rather than a triumphant road, in his progress as the author and finisher of our faith. Now, as the fitness must have arisen from his relation to us, and not abstractedly on his own account, it may be allowed us, with all humility, to enquire wherein He was thus made conformable to his brethren.

This conformability to human nature is discoverable, I apprehend, in the general principle that suffering and adversity is the

* See Heb. ch. ii. v. 10—18.

school of moral excellence ; “ and that, as
 “ the race of mankind being intended for
 “ a higher station amongst the works of
 “ their Creator, are trained up for it by the
 “ trials and troubles of which the world is
 “ full ; so also many a particular person,
 “ whom God hath designed to raise up in
 “ the present life to an extraordinary de-
 “ gree of greatness, has in the wisdom of
 “ his providence, been exercised by a series
 “ of afflictions as remarkable as that ad-
 “ vancement to which they have conducted
 “ him.” *

It has been the observation of moralists in all ages, that some of the worthiest and best of mankind have passed through scenes of remarkable trial and suffering. “ If the Jews,” says Bishop Leng †, “ would have consulted their own scriptures impartially, they might have known, that many of their own prophets and holy men, whom they acknowledged to have been messengers of God, were men of suffering and grievously persecuted, sometimes even to

* Ogden’s Sermons, vol. i. p. 192.

† Sermon XVI. p. 485—487.

" death ; and farther, they might have
 " known, from these very prophets who
 " foretold his coming, that he was to be a
 " man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
 " This, therefore, ought not to have offend-
 " ed them. The Gentiles might have
 " learned, from some of their most esteemed
 " philosophers, that outward pomp and
 " greatness, power and riches of the world,
 " are rather to be despised than admired, by
 " a truly great man : that no good man is
 " the less beloved of God for being placed
 " in a state of poverty and contempt, as
 " Epictetus and other excellent persons
 " aver ; or for being hated and put to death
 " by their fellow-citizens, as Socrates, one
 " of the brightest instances of heathen vir-
 " tue : that the most eminent examples, and
 " such as were fittest to teach and reform
 " the world, had been tried in the furnace
 " of affliction : that misery and suffering is
 " so far from being inconsistent with the
 " greatest virtue and goodness, that, accord-
 " ing to Plato's reasoning, to make the cha-
 " racter of a truly righteous man, *he must*
 " *be stript of all things in the world, even of*

“ the credit and reputation of being righteous,
 “ because, if he be thought a just person by
 “ the world, honour and worldly advantage
 “ will be his portion ; and then it cannot be
 “ known whether it be real virtue, or the ad-
 “ vantages of it, which he pursues : he must,
 “ therefore, be reckoned wicked and unjust,
 “ while he retains the strictest justice and
 “ integrity unshaken, even to death ; and then
 “ the consequence will be, that such a just
 “ man will be exposed to all manner of ill
 “ treatment and suffering ; and at last will be
 “ put to a cruel death, or crucified.” *

If the founder of Christianity had been

* Τὸν δίκαιον ισῶμεν τῷ λόγῳ, ἄνδρα ἀπλεῖν καὶ γενναῖον,
 καὶ Αἰχύλον, & δοκεῖν ἀλλ’ εἶναι ἀγαθὸν ἐθέλοντα. Ἀφα-
 ρετέον δὴ τὸ δοκεῖν, εἰ γάρ δόξει δίκαιος εἶναι, ἔσονται αὐτῷ
 τιμαι καὶ δωρεαί, δοκεῖν τοιότῳ εἶναι. ἀδηλον δὲ εἴτε τοῦ δικαίου,
 εἴτε τῶν δωρεῶν τε καὶ τιμῶν ἔνεκα, τοιότῳ εἴη· γυμνωτέος δὴ
 πάντων, πλὴν δικαιοσύνης, καὶ ποιητέος ἐναντίως διακείμενος
 τῷ προτερέῳ (ἀδίκῳ sc.) μηδὲν γάρ ἀδικῶν, δόξαν ἔχετω τὴν
 μεγίσην ἀδικίας. οὐδὲν δὲ βεβασανισμένος εἰς δικαιοσύνην τῷ
 μὴ τέγμεσθαι ὑπὸ κακοδοξίας, καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ αὐτῆς γιγνομένων
 ἀλλ’ ἡτοι ἀμειάσται μέχρι θανάτου δοκῶν μὲν εἶναι ἀδίκος
 διὰ βίου, ὃν δὲ δίκαιος — ἐρεψι δὲ τάδε ὅτι οὖτα διακεί-
 μενος ὁ δίκαιος μαστιγώσεται, σρεβλώσεται, δεδήσεται, ἐκκα-
 θήσεται τῷ φθαλμῷ τελευτῶν, πάντα κακὰ παθῶν, ἀναχινδυ-
 λευθήσεται. Plato. de Repub. lib. 2. p. 361. vol. ii. edit.
 Serrani.

in a lofty rather than a humble situation, his example could not have possessed these extensively moral benefits which it is now calculated to impress : his precepts respecting humility and contentment, and resignation towards God, would have lost much of their force had they not been inculcated by one “ who knew not where to lay his head.”

Lastly, had the author of Christianity been distinguished by his outward pomp and dignity, the success of his religion might, perhaps, in some degree, have been attributable to these external endowments ; at least, infidelity would have had a plausible ground of argument in such distinctions.

Had Christianity been ushered into the world by one distinguished for warlike or ambitious achievements, it would have failed of producing the most important purposes of a Divine Revelation. Instead of impressing its followers with the vanity of terrestrial glory, it would have fired them with all those aspiring incentives to which mankind were already so much inclined. Instead of teaching them to look forward

to eternity, it would have made them desirous to emulate their leader by the pursuits of conquest and ambition. A religion of this kind would probably have risen and fallen with those political changes which had accompanied its first existence ; or, like Mahometanism, it would demand the assistance of political despotism to uphold it, whereas the strength of Christianity consists in its *moral* grandeur. The suffering character of its founder possesses more real influence on the heart, than if he had wielded the sceptre of Rome, or had overrun the world with his arms. Does not this suffering character of the author of Christianity evince the close connection of our religion with the principles of the human mind ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 68.]

SECTION XXIII.

Does not the Christian Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body confirm our natural Sentiments respecting the Immortality of the Soul?

THE great doctrine of Natural Theology *, being that on which all its force and importance depends, is the immortality of the soul and the continuance of our existence as the same beings after death. How eagerly this doctrine was maintained, and yet how dubiously it was proved, may be seen in the writings of the ancient philosophers. Cicero himself appears to have clung to it rather as a wish and a hope, than as a point of moral certainty, whilst it was often derided by the more licentious, as a mere device and fiction of legislators to preserve the order of society.

What was the great difficulty which rendered all the ancient arguments for the

* See Part I. Sect. 27.

soul's immortality so dark and inconclusive? Why, it was plainly this,— they proceeded on the supposition that the body was lost for ever. Now, since man was made up of body and soul, they could not but apprehend lest the *separation* of these component parts of his nature might endanger his entire constitution, or at least might affect his personal identity.

And this apprehension seems to be too well founded to admit of any satisfactory reply. If all our joys and sufferings come to us in the present life through the medium of our senses ; if human nature be not a merely spiritual substance, but a spirit associated with a material vehicle, then it can never be shown that this connection may not be *essential* to our existence ; and that if this connection be dissolved, we may not perish therewith. The same apprehension will apply with still greater force to the belief of a state of future retribution, wherein we are supposed to suffer or enjoy according to the deeds done in the body.

Now, these great and apparently insuperable difficulties have been altogether re-

moved by the discoveries of Christianity respecting the resurrection of the body. By this doctrine, the belief of the immortality of the soul has been established on the most sure and satisfactory grounds. It is established, not by metaphysical speculations, but by a conjunction of time with eternity ; by asserting that we shall exist hereafter in the same component condition as we do at present ; that death is but a *temporary* separation of mind and body ; and that when this separation is at an end, we shall live after the same manner that we now do. Consequently death is a mere interval like sleep ; and the reunion of our minds and bodies assures us of our personal identity.

Considered as a mere hypothesis, there is something of credibility in this doctrine of the resurrection of the body ; because it is plainly the only sufficient hypothesis whereon to found our hopes of the immortality of the soul, and of a state of future rewards and punishments. Had it been delivered only as an article of faith, I think, that it would have been highly deserving of the attention of mankind. But in a point of

such vital importance to our happiness, Christianity hath furnished us with facts and examples to confirm our belief. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is now to be considered rather as a matter of *history* than of speculation. The same evidence which applies to the miracles of Jesus in raising individuals from the dead, and the great and overwhelming evidence of his own resurrection, bearing in all their force upon this leading article of Natural Theology.

It becomes every rational Deist, on his own principles, to examine most seriously into the proofs of a Religion which thus offers to establish the immortality of the soul on the only sure foundation on which it can rest, *viz.* upon that of fact and example; and which furnishes us with the only sufficient principles on which our personal identity can depend, *viz.* upon our restoration to those corporeal substances with which our minds are here associated. Whoever is desirous to place the leading doctrines of Natural Theology on a sure and solid basis, cannot refuse to examine with

the most scrupulous attention into facts which, if true, put an end to the doubts of philosophy ; and which, even if false, would furnish us with the only reasonable hypothesis on which to build a probable belief of our continuing to exist as the same beings in a future state.

Query 1st. Have not these arguments received considerable illustration from the many successful attempts at restoring suspended animation ? See the Sermons preached before the Humane Society, particularly the masterly discourse of Bishop Horsley, vol. iii. serm. 39.

Query 2d. Was it not the object of Christ's descent into a place of separate spirits, whilst his body remained in the grave ; and of his *visible* ascent into heaven, to accomplish the whole circuit of human existence, so as to render him a complete prototype of human nature, under all its circumstances of death and resurrection, and exaltation to endless life and happiness ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 69.]

SECTION XXIV.

*Are not the Doctrines of Christianity, respecting the Day of Judgment and of eternal Rewards and Punishments, in close Correspondence with those of Natural Theology? **

THE general conviction that we shall be happy or miserable in another life, accordingly as we have conducted ourselves well or ill in the present, has been the persuasion of mankind at large in all ages. This belief is essential to the welfare and order of society ; it is the foundation of all laws whether human or divine, and has therefore been received by legislators into their codes of public jurisprudence, and by moralists into their treatises of ethics and of natural theology.

All that is peculiar to the Christian Revelation on this subject, consists in its asserting that there shall be a day of judg-

* See Part I. Sect. 28.

ment wherein men shall be visibly condemned or absolved by the Son of God, and that this judgment shall take place immediately at the end of the world. "Reason did," says Butler, "as it might well conclude, that it should finally and upon the whole be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked; but it could not be determined on any principles of reason, whether human creatures might not have been appointed to pass through other states of life and being, before that distributive justice should finally and effectually take place. Revelation teaches us that the next state of things after the present is appointed for the execution of this justice, and that it shall be no longer delayed."

The doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments is also strictly belonging to natural religion; both the moralists and the poets of antiquity describing them in language which is wonderfully similar to that which is made use of in the Scriptures. The only addition made by Revelation, arises out of its discovery of the resurrection of the body, by which it asserts that we

shall suffer and enjoy hereafter, in those corporeal substances which we now possess. This renders the doctrine of Natural Theology more plain and intelligible, but it is rather a more exact delineation of the same principles, than a representation of what is altogether new and original.

Hence we deem it quite unnecessary to reply to any of the modern objections which have been urged against eternal punishments, because they are objections which apply to Christianity on a point in which it is strictly in unison with the previous opinions of legislators and moralists, and which, if allowed to be valid, would affect the interests of Natural not less than those of Revealed Religion.

Query. Is it not an instance of gross partiality in our reasonings, that so many have objected to the threatenings of eternal punishments, whilst they have readily believed in the promises of eternal rewards?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 70.]

SECTION XXV.

*Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from its Doctrine respecting the Future Destruction of the World ? **

By all who believe that our world was not self-created nor eternal, it must be received at least as a probable hypothesis that it shall not last for ever ; and the same hypothesis is rendered still farther credible from the observations of certain natural phenomena, which may incline us to think that our earth may possibly contain within itself the elements of its own dissolution.

Nor, if we consult our moral sentiments, does it appear at all probable that a state of moral trial and probation should be intended to last through all eternity, but rather that when the purposes of such a preparatory scene are fulfilled, the world should pass away with the occasion for which it was originally created. There is the greatest abstract improbability, that any race of intelligent beings should multiply *indefinitely* throughout all ages.

* See Part I. Sect. 27 and 28.

And when we reflect that human knowledge, however progressive, must have its bounds and limits, and that there is a point beyond which our faculties in their present situation could make no discoveries, it appears as if whenever this summit of knowledge and civilization should be attained, that no further end could be answered by the prolongation of the world's existence. In such a state, the improbableness of human reason could find no scope for action, and since it could not remain stationary, it would take a retrograde direction. But to suppose mankind in such a situation, is revolting to our conceptions of providential wisdom. When the earth is peopled up to its fullest capacity, there will be a stop put to all further improvement in civilization.*

To this observation we may also add the common sentiments of mankind, that the world would come to an end, which opinion seems generally to have obtained amongst the ancients, particularly amongst the Stoicks, who borrowed it from the older system of He-

* See Sumner's Records of the Creation, vol. ii. ch. 5.

raclitus. It would be difficult indeed to establish any system of natural theology which did not either formally or tacitly admit of this doctrine ; for if there is to be a time when all men are to be judged according to their works, this time, according to the universal belief of mankind, will take place at the consummation of this preparatory scene, which is but a temporary scaffolding for eternity.

Query. Is there not some further confirmation of this doctrine to be derived from the nature of those minerals and fossils which are either not re-produced, or at least not in sufficient quantities to bear an *indefinite* consumption ? From the present state of our knowledge on this subject, is it not justifiable to conclude, (however some may smile at the remark,) that the time may arrive when the earth would be disemboweled of all those treasures which now conduce to the well-being of mankind ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 69.]

SECTION XXVI.

Are the Mysteries of Christianity any Argument against its Credibility?

It has been remarked * of a Revelation in general, that it would in all probability contain some doctrines superior to reason, and that no religion which was entirely devoid of mysteries would be suited to the state of our faculties. If these remarks be well founded there can be no presumption, on abstract principles, against the occurrence of some mysterious doctrines. The objection can be urged only against the *peculiarities* which belong to those mysteries which are brought forward by Christianity.

Now first, it should be considered, how little we can form any abstract opinion on a subject of such obscurity. If it be granted that we are likely to meet with *some* mysteries in any Revelation of God to man, might it not have been foreseen that our

* See Part I. Sect. 21 and 29.

knowledge and apprehensions concerning these mysteries would have been extremely limited and imperfect?

We are willing to grant however that no degree of force should bring us to admit of any mysteries which are plainly contradictory to reason, or which would authorize any extravagance of moral conduct; but after these exceptions, I know not that we should be justified in rejecting any Revelation on account of the mysterious doctrines which it might contain.

Still there are some particulars which might reasonably be looked for, even on this dark and obscure subject, and which, if they answered to our expectations, might be viewed as presumptive arguments to recommend a particular Revelation to our attention.

First, Such mysteries should belong to those parts of the Revelation which were necessarily beyond our apprehensions. They should have respect to the *divine* nature and operations, not to those plain and practical duties which concern *our* conduct.

Secondly, They should not be merely ab-

stract mysteries, but also serve as moral incentives, so that their utility in the latter respect might recommend them to our belief in the former. Now, let it be fairly considered, whether the mysterious doctrines of Christianity do not correspond with both these particulars, and whether, on this account, they may not be fairly viewed as evidences in favour of the Christian Revelation ; or at least, whether they do not neutralize all objections which might be urged abstractly against mysterious doctrines in general ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 72.]

SECTION XXVII.

'Are the Positive Institutions of Christianity any Argument against its Credibility ?'

THE nature of man, as we have remarked *, requiring some positive institutions in any Revelation which might have been possibly given by God, there can be no presumption against the positive institutions of Christianity, but such as arise from their peculiar nature.

If from reason we might venture to lay down any probable rule concerning these appointments, we might perhaps make the following anticipation, "that they would be few and simple, such as might be observed in all countries, and such as should carry with them a strong moral and religious obligation."

Now, that the positive institutions of Christianity fully realize these anticipations, there can be no dispute. In number they are but two. The one *initiatory*, on our

* See Part I. Sect. 30.

becoming members of the Christian church; the other *commemorative*, being designed to remind us of that sacrifice and atonement, on which our hopes of salvation are founded.

Let any man sit down to *imagine* institutions more simple, more affecting than these. That upon becoming members of a religion, we should receive some badge, some token of our new profession, this cannot be deemed unnatural or unlikely, because something of the kind usually occurs upon entering into any corporate body or community. It is no other than the indentures of our service. We then enter into a formal covenant to live according to the laws, the doctrines, and the hopes of our religion.

The other appointment is founded on the sacrificial character of the Christian dispensation. It reminds us of our being not in a state of innocence, but in that of penitence. But this, as we have remarked, is the only treatment which is suited to our present convictions. Can any institution have a closer relation to the wants and feelings of our nature?

At the same time, it must be allowed, that there is a fine originality in this commemoration of the death of Jesus. No other founder of a religion has desired to be remembered chiefly by his followers for dying a painful and ignominious death. Yet how simple and how sublime is the moral of such an institution. It is at once the essence of faith and of practice. It teaches us that we cannot be saved by our own merits, but that we must rely on the free mercy of God. It discovers to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the holiness and justice of Him who would not pardon without this tremendous sacrifice. It teaches us to live like those who are in a state of trial and penitential suffering, to regard the world chiefly as a state of moral discipline and probation. But these are the views of natural as well as of revealed religion, and he who would scoff at them when taught by the Gospel, should also deride them when inculcated by moralists.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 73.]

SECTION XXVIII.

Is not the System of Christianity delivered like that of Nature, as dependent on the Will and Power of God?

IN a former chapter *, we have remarked, that in all our enquiries into moral or physical science, we must argue upon things as they are, not upon ideal suppositions how the world might have been possibly constructed. We have faculties which enable us, by patient investigation, to draw up a tolerable history of facts. These facts are entirely dependent on the will of God ; and when we have ascertained their existence, we must rest upon this foundation, as the ground-work of all philosophy.

Now, it is no little confirmation of revealed religion, that it proceeds exactly upon the same principles. We are not informed, by the Scriptures, whether the world could not have been saved, if it had pleased

* See Part I. Sect. 31.

God, by some other method than the death and sufferings of Jesus. What is asserted, is the *propriety*, the *fitness* of this method as it relates to mankind. There is no limit assigned to the abstract power of God, but there is a limit placed to the researches and enquiries of man. This limit, in natural and moral science, as well as in revealed theology, consists in confining our attention to things as they are ; in tracing out the actual systems both of nature and of grace ; and then in leaving them to depend on the will and wisdom of the Supreme.

Hence, in laying down the doctrines of Christianity, it becomes us to state them as historical facts (see Part I. ch. 33), or as natural phenomena, not to assert that they arise out of fixed and immutable necessity. It has pleased God to give us those faculties which we now possess, and to place us in a world which is suited and adapted to these faculties. Had it seemed good to him, both our faculties and situations might have been totally different : but this is not a subject of rational enquiry, or which can lead to any sure and useful information. So, likewise, it

has pleased God to manifest his love towards mankind, by sending his son into the world to die as a sacrifice and atonement for our sins. It is here also possible, that he might have adopted some other method, if his sovereign power and wisdom had been differently exerted. But these are not enquiries within the range of our limited faculties. It is our wisdom to examine into facts as they now exist ; for, as Butler has remarked, “ the enquiry, what would have followed if God had not done as he has, may have in it some great impropriety, and ought not to be carried any farther than is necessary to help our partial and inadequate conceptions of things.”

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 74.]

SECTION XXIX.

Is not the Evidence of Christianity the most powerful and comprehensive which can be addressed to the Human Mind?

THE evidence of the Christian Revelation is made up both of historical facts and of moral arguments. It thus combines the abstract associations of natural theology with the peculiar advantages of a revealed and historical dispensation.

Now, this connection of natural with traditional theology, necessarily brings to the Christian Revelation the most comprehensive and universal evidence which can be laid before the mind. It is the evidence which belongs both to history and to moral science; it appeals equally to our hearts and to our understandings; it is either a detail of facts, which have been recorded by others, or it is a series of moral convictions addressed to our

own consciences. The combination of these two kinds of evidence, forms the strongest proof which we are capable of receiving, on all subjects which do not admit of strict mathematical demonstration.

That this conjunction of abstract with historical evidence exhausts the whole capacity of our minds, is plain from the reflection, that all our faculties are either moral or intellectual. It is to the former, chiefly, that what are called the *internal* proofs of Christianity are addressed ; whilst its *external* evidence appeals to those intellectual powers by which the whole fabric of human knowledge has been reared.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 75.]

SECTION XXX.

*Are not the peculiar Evidences of Christianity
the strongest Confirmation of Natural Theo-
logy ? **

THE two great articles of natural theology are the existence of God and the superintendance of Providence over the world. The regular and established course of nature has always been the chief strong-hold of those who doubted or denied the existence of an intelligent mind. They were disposed to refer the regularity of these natural operations to fixed fate and immutable necessity ; and though their pretences had often been refuted, yet still the appearance of this regularity always kept up amongst the ancients a considerable number of atheistical sceptics.

Now, it was the effect of *miracles*, by breaking through this regularity, to show that an active and intelligent being pre-

* See Part I. Sect. 45.

sided over nature ; and the same evidence, which carries down to us the record of these miracles, must always assure us of this important truth. It establishes the personality of the Deity on a sure and indisputable basis ; for it shows that neither mechanism nor fate, nor chance, can exclude the Almighty Mind from the command of the universe.

A similar observation will also apply to the doctrine of a Providence, a doctrine which connects the Creator with his works, and yet which had been denied by many of the ancient theists. Now, *prophecy* is a direct proof of such superintendance in the affairs of the world ; and though it had been of no other advantage, it would have been an invaluable evidence of natural theology.

Query 1. May we not hence account, upon *moral* principles, for the astonishing success of Christianity on its first promulgation ?

2. Do not the universal pretences to prophecy amongst Pagans, show that it might naturally be expected to form a leading evidence in any Divine Revelation ?

SECTION XXXI.

*Has not Christianity all the Essentials of a Universal Religion? **

It would no doubt have been a great argument against the truth of the Christian Revelation, if the obstacles which prevent its becoming universally prevalent, were such as arose out of the confined nature of its principles and genius. But since they are no other than such as prevent the universal diffusion of natural theology, and the promotion of learning and civilization amongst all the nations of the earth, the objection, if it be urged at all, will apply not so much to the Christian Revelation in particular, as to the whole government of Providence.

What is it which prevents the universal spread of our religion? “ Is it that God may not be everywhere worshipped under this dispensation? Is it that all men are not interested in its general principles, or

* See Part I. Sect. 34.

that its duties do not extend to all ; or that it is not adapted to the principles of our nature, nor calculated to extend our happiness and comfort ? Or is it loaded with a number of positive institutions which are adapted only to local situations ?” * No, not one of these imputations can be fairly urged against Christianity. It is restrained only by the barbarism and ignorance of mankind. If all the nations of the world were in the same state of moral civilization with Great Britain, can any one doubt whether Christianity would not *naturally* spread itself from pole to pole ? Could you make the same assertions of Mahometanism, or of any other religion which hath ever appeared amongst men ?

There are some other presumptions relating to a universal religion, which are also to be found in Christianity. It seems probable that such a religion should have commenced with the beginning of the world ; that it should always have been in the world, and that it should be intended to

* See Watson’s Evidences of Christianity, Part II. ch. 5.

last to its conclusion. Now, this is true of Christianity when it is viewed in connection with Judaism, and if the assertions of its founder respecting the fortunes of his church are to be at all accredited. There is also a probability that such a religion would be published immediately by divine authority ; and that it would rest upon the same influence as that of nature, and proceed in unison with the government of Providence. But this also is true of Christianity, if it be indeed that Revelation which it professes to be.

The mere continuance of Christianity for so many hundred years, and its progress amongst so many nations of diversified characters and manners, is no slight proof of it being intended for a universal dispensation. Until there shall be an example of some nation highly civilized and well instructed in the doctrines of natural religion, living under a free government, and enjoying intercourse with this part of Europe, who shall be able to withstand the moral and historical evidences of our religion, the

whole force of inductive reasoning will remain in favour of our argument.

If, indeed, the hopes of philosophy are ever to be realized, and the whole human race shall attain to the blessings of order and civilization, how are these advantages to be effected but by the diffusion of commercial and civil knowledge? And is it not probable that this knowledge will be chiefly promoted by means of those nations which are already Christians? But, if so, the knowledge of Christianity will go hand in hand with the progress of civilization. Now, this is not only a probability founded upon abstract reasoning, but one which is in some degree founded on past experience, and warranted by the present appearance of the world. Is it not thus that the blessings of knowledge and civilization have been gradually imported from Europe to America?

Whatever has been the chief method by which mankind have hitherto been improved in social order, and brought into an acquaintance with their moral and religious

duties, it is highly probable that the same method will still continue to advance them in the same blessings. Now, that Christianity has hitherto been the chief channel of diffusing these advantages, there can be no dispute; and it will accordingly follow that we are to look to this religion for the consummation of our hopes hereafter.

Query. Is it not probable that the diffusion both of Christianity and of useful knowledge and civilization, will take place chiefly by means of colonies sent out by the nations of Europe? Is not the discovery of the real principle of population a step towards awakening this spirit of colonization amongst us?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 77.]

SECTION XXXII.

*Does not Christianity profess to be a Revelation designed for the Benefit of the whole World? **

ALTHOUGH the considerations which have been already urged seem sufficient to show the universal nature of the Christian religion, yet it may be proper to show that this dispensation is unlimited, even whilst its knowledge is but partially diffused, and its temporal benefits extended only to a small proportion of mankind.

Now, that the language of Christianity admits of the most wide and universal interpretation, may be seen from the following arguments: First, Its author is described as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” as “having given himself a ransom for all,” as “having tasted death for all men.” He is styled “the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but

* See Part I. Sect. 34.

for those of the whole world.” His death is described as being of equal extent with the universal evils arising from the Fall; and he must often have suffered, it is argued, since the foundation of the world, had not his atonement been of inestimable and unlimited importance.

Secondly, The strongest proof of this universality arises out of the character of the founder of Christianity, as “the Mediator between God and man;” and from the office which He will discharge over all, as “the Judge of quick and dead.” This being a doctrine admitted by all Christians, there is no appeal from its consequences. If Jesus is to be the judge of all men, then it is in the highest degree improbable that the whole human race is not in some way or other connected with Him as a Redeemer. The same conclusion will also arise from those passages of Scripture in which we are directed “to pray for all men,” “to love and to honour all men.”

Let any candid deist consider, whether it can be fair to object against a religion which contains such universal doctrines; as

if it were limited, and partial, and confined to a few? Whether he believes in Christianity or no, as a Divine Revelation, he must admit that these doctrines are laid down in the New Testament; and that, therefore, it deserves that prepossession in its favour which naturally arises out of its professing to be intended for the benefit of all mankind.

Query. Has there any other religion ever appeared in the world which has made the same universal professions?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 78.]

SECTION XXXIII.

*Are the Divisions or the Vices of Christians
to be esteemed any Argument against the
Truth of our Religion ? **

SINCE it was not only probable but certain, that, according to the present constitution of human nature, whatever Revelation might be afforded, it would be subject to the same variety of moral dispositions and intellectual talents which are employed about the ordinary affairs of the world, it cannot be equitable to urge that as an objection against the truth of Christianity, which arises solely out of the state and condition of human nature.

How was it possible to prevent many differences of opinion respecting any dispensation of God to man, unless all our talents and capacities had been reduced to the same level, or unless that variety which is one of the leading features of nature, had

* See Part I. Sect. 35. and 36.

been entirely abolished? Is not Revelation, in this respect, in the same situation as natural theology? Is it not chiefly in the *theory* of both that these difficulties occur? Are the divisions which subsist amongst Christians more numerous than those which occur amongst philosophers? or would it be fair to argue against philosophy itself, because there is such a variety of sects and opinions in the learned world?

If all Christians had thought exactly alike on the subject of their religion, there would have been little or no scope for the exercise of moral candour and of mutual forbearance. There would not have been the same motives for diligence and curiosity, and for investigating the grounds of our own opinions. This uniformity would neither have corresponded to the appearances of human life, nor have elicited human talents, nor tended to increase our knowledge or virtue.

As to the vices of many who profess to believe in Christianity, they are no more chargeable on Revelation than the vices of others who believe only in the doctrines of

natural religion are to be charged upon the principles of rational theism. “ There is, I fear,” says Ogden, “ yet one more circumstance in which the Christian Revelation and the religion of nature bear to each other, unhappily, but too near a resemblance ; and that is in their success, or rather in their want of it. They neither of them produce, in any due degree, the effect which they ought — the reformation of the world.”

The same remark may, indeed, be extended to all the blessings of creation ; to our various talents of mind, and body, and estate. Some of the most valuable gifts of God become by abuse the most fruitful sources of calamity and crime. That Christianity, then, should be liable to similar abuses, shows only that it corresponds to the ordinary dealings of God with mankind, and that it is subject to the same free agency of man which so often perverts the best intentions of Providence.

But this objection, if pushed to its full extent, *viz.* that Christianity has not upon the whole improved the moral condition of

mankind, is false and unfounded; as any one may learn, either from a comparison of ancient with modern history, or from what perhaps is more to be depended on, a comparison of the present state of the Christian world with that portion of the globe which is still buried in Paganism and idolatry. The truth seems to be as we have already remarked, that neither Christianity nor the religion of nature have done *all* which they might have done for the improvement and happiness of mankind. Both have succeeded to a certain extent, and both have failed beyond this extent. Yet neither are justly chargeable with errors which arise out of the weakness of reason, or out of the abuse of man's free agency.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 79.]

SECTION XXXIV.

*Is it not a strong Presumption in favour of Christianity, that it is adapted to the Capacities of the Poor ? **

THERE is one consideration which must strike the mind of every reflecting theist, as a remarkable circumstance in favour of the Christian religion. It is this, that it is adapted to the situations of the bulk of mankind ; that it has overcome the difficulty of instructing the poor in their duties toward God and their neighbours ; and that even allowing it had taught nothing beyond the duties of morality, yet that it has taught them to the people at large, instead of confining this knowledge to a select and limited number of the higher orders.

So sensible were the ancient philosophers of this difficulty, that they seldom appear to have attempted any thing beyond the instruction of their own immediate adherents,

* See Part I. Sect. 37.

giving up the cause of the multitude as altogether desperate. It was a general maxim amongst them, that every one should worship and sacrifice according to the custom of his country ; that is, in other language, that the errors and superstitions of the vulgar should not be openly disturbed. *

Now, it is surely no little argument in favour of the Christian Revelation, that it has adopted a method of instruction which is level to the apprehensions of all mankind ; and that, while its doctrines possess a sublimity which may delight and amaze the most refined taste, they have a plainness and simplicity which render them practically intelligible to the meanest capacity.

The institution of a visible church, and the ordinance of public preaching, should also be mentioned as no slight indications of a wisdom superior to all the inventions of human ingenuity. Simple as these appointments may appear, they are altogether peculiar to Christianity ; and they have done

* See Xenoph. Memorabil., lib. iv. c. 3. sect. 8.

more for the interests of piety and morals than all the labours of philosophy. Their simplicity is like that of nature, in which every thing is accomplished by means which are apparently the most artless, and yet the most efficacious.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 80.]

SECTION XXXV.

*Is it not a Presumption in favour of Christianity, that its Truth has been admitted by the great Majority of the learned ? **

WE have already more than once remarked that the most sage and reflecting of the ancient philosophers acknowledged their want of a Divine Revelation, and were fully sensible of the darkness and uncertainty which attended their own reasonings. Hence we have deduced a presumption in favour of a Revelation in general. But this presumption will be still further heightened when applied to Christianity, since it has actually received the approbation and belief of the wisest and best of those to whom its doctrines and evidences have been addressed.

We do not deny that some individuals of extraordinary talents have avowed themselves unbelievers ; but these are not only

* See Part I. Sect. 35, 36. and 38.

few in number, but in moral worth and respectability of character they are not to be mentioned with those who have given it their support. A large proportion of these infidels have been men of the most loose and profligate morals, and who have avowed their contempt and disbelief of the most essential articles of natural theology. Others have assailed our religion with wit and buffoonery, instead of debating its evidences with calmness and sobriety. Now, these cannot be adduced as fair and conscientious witnesses against us ; and their opposition, if it can be supposed to have any weight, ought to be esteemed entirely in favour of its truth. And though, as we are willing to admit, there are a few others of decent and respectable character, yet something must always be allowed in moral computations for the peculiarities of individual temper and disposition. They may have been early prejudiced against Christianity by the errors with which they had seen it associated, or they may not have considered it with sufficient attention ; or the love of paradox and singularity may have tempted them to

oppose what the generality of their neighbours admitted. The same exceptions have occurred in the belief of the plainest doctrines of natural theology. At any rate, the deduction to be made on this account is not sufficient to counterbalance the weight of the opposite evidence.

The argument is this : Whereas the generality of the ancient philosophers derided and disbelieved the popular system of Pagan mythology ; upon the contrary, the great majority of good and wise and learned men in modern times, have admitted the truth of the Christian Revelation. Now, as it was a presumptive argument against the former, that it had offended the judgments and opinions of those who were best enabled to decide upon such questions ; so it must be granted to be an equal presumption in favour of the latter, that it has received the approbation and support of the majority of those who could most easily have detected any fallacy in its evidences or any absurdity in its doctrines.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 81.]

SECTION XXXVI.

Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from its having gradually and progressively advanced ?

ACCORDING to the principles of reason and probability, it has been shown *, that a Revelation, coming from God, would be gradually and imperceptibly developed ; that it would not at once shoot up into sudden maturity, but that it would accord with the usual course of nature, by progressively advancing with the different ages of the world, and by accompanying us in our various stages of knowledge and civilisation.

This probability is not only warranted by our observations upon external 'nature, but it is confirmed by the whole history of human knowledge. If the evidences of such a Revelation were to be in any degree rational, it is necessary that they should partake of this gradual and progressive deve-

* See Part I. Sect. 39.

lopement ; and that they should be suited to the character of man according to his advance in mental improvement.

Now this is what we affirm may be discovered of Christianity, when viewed in its connection with Judaism. It is a dispensation which hath been gradually unfolding from creation unto the present day ; its evidences, doctrines, and precepts have been adapted to the infancy, the youth, and the manhood of the world. At first it depended, in a great measure, upon visible manifestations of the Deity ; then it was shadowed out in types and figures, accompanied with prophetical descriptions ; and at length, in the fulness of time, the expected Messiah arrived. With him commenced a new series of events : that religion, which had hitherto been a state of pupilage, and confined to a particular people, was now to be offered to the common acceptance of all nations ; that religion, which had hitherto been typical and scenical, was now to be realised by the accomplishment of predictions, and to be laid before mankind as matter of moral and his-

torical record. But this change could not be effected without a multitude of plain and incontestible miracles, aided by all the force of prophetical accomplishments and moral excellence. The immediate result was, the rapid diffusion of Christianity over the whole Roman empire. After this grand establishment of the Christian religion, it was left to confide upon its own intrinsic excellence: its progress was left dependent, in a great degree, on secondary causes, and the state of human knowledge and civilisation. Hence it sank and suffered with the decline of learning, still, however, keeping alive those embers which were afterwards to be relumined into flame. With returning light and knowledge, it sprang again into activity, achieving its own reformation with that of philosophy; and it has ever since been making slow but constant advancement in the world.

Now, whatever may be thought of this Revelation in other respects, it must be granted that it is calculated to afford the greatest display of moral and historical evidence. In addition to its miracles and pro-

phecies, it offers to our consideration all the *incidental* proofs and circumstantial arguments which have grown up in the period of nearly six thousand years. To mention only one example, how could the evidence, which is reflected upon Christianity from the history and the sufferings of the Jews, have been connected with any other than a gradual and progressive dispensation? But why should we mention any evidence in particular, when the whole series of our arguments is one continued illustration of this assertion?

From these observations, it will appear upon what a vast and complicated pile of evidence the Christian Revelation is founded, and how totally they mistake its nature and genius who would endeavour to simplify it into any one species of proof, to the exclusion of others. In the endless variety of its arguments, there is matter adapted to every variety of disposition. Those who delight in a series of connected facts may here trace the history of mankind from their first creation. Those who are pleased with the resemblances between types and reali-

ties, may here compare the whole of the Jewish polity with their explanations in the Christian church. Here the lover of strict and positive testimony may find multitudes conspiring to bear witness to miracles; and here, also, those who take pleasure in comparing predictions with their corresponding events, may find the most clear, accurate, and incontestible examples of their favourite species of evidence.

But of all the proofs which have arisen to Christianity, from its being a gradual and progressive system, none are more valuable, more numerous, or more justly worthy of attention, than those which depend on its alliance and connection with the government of Providence. If it had not been this gradual and progressive dispensation, all its moral, reasonable, and circumstantial evidence would have been lost. But this is the kind of evidence which comes home to our business and bosoms without the toil of study and the labour of abstraction. Amongst the thousands who believe in Christianity, it is but a few, comparatively, who are enabled to look into its prophetical

and historical arguments. The great majority of its followers must rely upon their own convictions of its suitability to their nature and condition, and to the effects which they behold it daily producing upon society. But these are evidences arising out of its being a gradual and progressive dispensation, from its harmonising with the course of society, and proceeding in unison with ordinary affairs of the world.

It is in this manner that the connection of Christianity with Natural Theology becomes more and more apparent ; so that *hereafter* it may imply some doubts of a Providence to question the truth of that religion by which the blessings of Providence have been chiefly distributed. Even *now* it looks too much like the carelessness of the sceptic to refuse to investigate its claims.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 82.]

SECTION XXXVII.

*Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from its permanent Continuance in the World ? **

SUPPOSING that novelty or persecution could account for the early influence and the rapid diffusion of Christianity, on its first publication, yet these causes must long since have ceased to operate. If it could have imposed on the credulity of dark and ignorant ages, is it probable that an imposture would flourish with the advancement of learning, and revive with returning intellect ?

Mahometanism, the only religion which can be compared to the Christian, was at first established by violence ; and it has never since been able to make its way out of the Turkish empire. Besides, its doctrines, unlike those of Christianity, are addressed to the passions, rather than to the

* See Part I. Sect. 40.

understandings, of mankind. But there is no subject of human reason on which so many minds have been exercised, as upon the evidences of the Christian Revelation. It was at first opposed to the united prejudices of Jews and Pagans; and ever since it has been combated by individuals of the most splendid talents. Now, what has been the practical result of all this enquiry and investigation? Why, not only the maintenance of Christianity against all the wit and learning of its opponents, but its prevalence, and propagation, and promotion in the world. Whether it be true or false, it has withstood all the attacks of unbelievers; it has alike triumphed over their secret machinations and their open violence. Humanly speaking, there is not the smallest probability that the Christian religion can ever be demolished. The predictions of the founder of Christianity, concerning his church, have begun to assume an *historical* as well as a prophetic appearance. To every future opponent, the same reply may be given which was given by Bishop Watson to Mr. Paine: "The Bible, Sir, has with-

stood the learning of Porphyry and the power of Julian ; to say nothing of the Manichean Faustus, it has resisted the genius of Bolingbroke and the wit of Voltaire, to say nothing of a numerous herd of inferior assailants. Why, then, should it fall by *your* force?"

This argument, though not conclusive, is certainly a strong presumption in favour of our religion : it evinces a power and buoyancy in its evidences which renders the cause of infidelity more and more hopeless. So far from a decay in the proofs of our religion, as Mr. Hume imagined, it grows rich with the spoils of time, and is invested with new credibility by the lapse of ages. By its permanence and continuance, it becomes more and more identified with the history of the world, with the progress of civilisation, with the government of Providence, and with the welfare of natural religion. Every unsuccessful attack upon its truth becomes another indirect evidence in its favour.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 83.]

SECTION XXXVIII.

*Is there not some Credibility derived to Christianity from its past and present Influence on Human Happiness? **

ON the acknowledged principles of natural theology, that we are living under the superintendance of a wise and merciful Providence, there must arise a strong presumptive argument in favour of any religion which has diffused the greatest portion of happiness and virtue amongst mankind; and which appears fitted to carry the faculties of the human mind to the highest pitch of moral excellence which they are capable of attaining.

Now previous to any enquiry into the evidences of Christianity considered as a divine revelation, it is matter of plain historical record, that this religion has diffused a greater proportion of happiness and virtue, and social and domestic order, than any other channel by which the prosperity of the

* See Part I. Sect. 41.

human race has been advanced. Consider the situation of modern Europe as contrasted with its ancient manners and condition, or compare it with those regions which are still unvisited by our religion, and you will at once be persuaded, that, whether Christianity be true or false in its divine pretensions, it is favourable to the exercise of reason, and to the promotion of our temporal happiness, in a degree, which places it at the head of all moral, political, and social improvements.

If we believe, with the generality of philosophers, that mankind are destined to attain far higher degrees of knowledge and civilisation than they now possess, and that there is a tendency in human affairs towards general improvement, is it not probable, that the same medium by which they have attained their present superiority will also conduct them to these ulterior advantages?

Since this religion, in particular, has been the most effectual instrument of reclaiming barbarous and savage nations, and of bringing them to juster notions respecting the

Deity, is it not probable, by an intercourse with those learned and polished countries, which are already Christian, that science, literature, and civilisation may be gradually carried throughout the world ? Is there not an accordance in these views between the hopes of philosophy, the promises of prophecy, and the experience of history ?

Let any reflecting Theist survey the past and present influence of Christianity upon human happiness ; let him consider how it has abolished many cruel and unnatural customs, introducing mildness, charity, and benevolence into the place of savage ferocity and tyrannical force ; let him consider how it has diffused, in some degree, over the whole of society those advantages which were before restricted to a few amongst the higher orders ; let him compare ancient with modern history, and then let him reflect whether it is probable that such extensive and inestimable benefits could have been derived from a mere fiction and imposture. Would it not be

subversive of the fundamentals of natural theology to believe that Providence had thus universally befriended the cause of error and delusion?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 84.]

SECTION XXXIX.

*Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from the Impieties and Contradictions contained in the Writings of its Opponents? **

It was long since observed by Mr. Locke that Deists in our days, who obstinately reject Revelation when offered to them, are not such men as Socrates and Tully, who lamented and deplored the ignorance of nature; but that under the pretence of deism, they generally ridicule all that is truly excellent in natural religion. †

This is a serious charge which requires to be upheld by strong evidence. The following facts will, I apprehend, go far to substantiate its truth.

Lord *Herbert* ‡ the father of our English Deists, apologizes for lewdness in certain cases “as resembling the thirst of a dropsy, “ or the inactivity of a lethargy;” and *Tin-*

* See Part I. Sect. 42.

† Reasonableness of Christianity.

‡ Leland, vol. i. Letter 1.

*dal** speaks in a similar manner in his book intituled “Christianity as old as the “Creation.” It was the favourite principle of Mr. *Hobbes*, that the civil law was the sole foundation of right and wrong; and that religion has no obligation, but as enjoined by the magistrate. *De Cive*, p. 343. *Bolingbroke* asserts †, “that the only consideration which can reconcile a man to “confine himself to one woman, and a “woman to one man, is this, that nothing “hinders them from indulging their de-“sires with others.” *Hume*‡ adopts the opinions of a French writer, “that adultery “must be practised if we would obtain all “the advantages of life; and that female “infidelity, when known, is a small thing, “and when unknown is nothing.” Self-denial, according to the same writer, is “a “monkish virtue.” *Bolingbroke* resolves our sentiments of sexual modesty into “mere vanity,” or pretence “for excessive lust.” This shame, he says, is but “arti-

* Christianity as old as the Creation, p. 32.

† Works, vol. v. p. 167.

‡ Fuller on Deism, p. 38.

" ficial, and has been inspired by human laws, by prejudices, and the like. He is not certain that the laws of nature forbid incest of the highest kind." See Leland's Deistical Writers, vol. ii. Letter 26.

It is the opinion of *Rousseau*, that our feelings are to be made the standard of morals. " I have but to consult myself," says he, " what I ought to do. All that I feel to be right, is right. Whatever I feel to be wrong is wrong. All the morality of our actions lies in the judgment we ourselves form of them." * The philosophy of Mr. *Gibbon* led him to blend the most obscene remarks with the details of history. *Godwin* recommends abortion and infanticide as the best methods to keep down population. *Bayle* attempts to prove atheism less hurtful to a state than superstition. The doctrine of a particular providence is denied by *Chubb* and *Bolingbroke*. Prayer is objected to by Mr. *Blount*. Lord *Shaftesbury* frequently attempts to ridicule the doctrine of future rewards and

* *Emilius*, vol. i. p. 166—168.

punishments. The propriety of public worship is strongly contested by *Bolingbroke*. He is also very sceptical as to the immortality of the soul, and denies that we have any notions of the moral attributes of God. *Collins* writes against the immortality of the soul, and against human liberty and pre-agency. Mr. *Hume* denies that we have any such evidence of the Divine attributes as can lead us to expect a state of moral retribution. The obscenities of *Voltaire* are scattered over every part of his writings. Lord *Chesterfield* inculcates a code of practical irreligion in his letters. *Godwin* and Mary *Woolstoncroft* derided the solemnities of marriage as of no import to society.

With such principles, it is no wonder that the lives of infidels should in general be profligate and licentious in the extreme. The morals of *Rochester* and *Wharton* need no comment. *Woolston* was a gross blasphemer. *Blount* solicited his sister-in-law to marry him, and being refused, shot himself. *Tindal* was distinguished for his vices, and for a total absence of moral

principle. Hobbes unblushingly avowed that he wrote his “ Leviathan to serve the “ cause of Charles I., but finding him fail “ of success, he turned it into a defence of “ Cromwell.” Morgan professed himself a Christian at the very time he was an infidel. Voltaire passed a life of profligacy and immorality. Hume died jesting about Charon and his boat. Collins, though an infidel, qualified himself for office by taking the Lord’s Supper. Shaftesbury did the same. Paine was notorious as a swearer and a drunkard. The confessions of Rousseau convict him of the most flagrant vices.*

If it should be replied, that the lives of many Christians are no better than those of infidels, while we unwillingly admit the fact, we must accompany our admission with two observations. First, that such Christians act in opposition to those principles which they profess, whereas the crimes of infidels are justified by their opinions. Secondly, that we have here mentioned the most eminent apostles of infidelity; those who are looked up as its ornaments and teachers. Now,

* See Fuller on Deism, Part I. Ch. 5.

let the most eminent teachers of Christianity be mentioned, and see whether they are equally celebrated for their vices and immoralities.

Supposing this to be a fair statement of the question, does not there a presumptive argument arise in favour of Christianity from the decided moral superiority, both in theory and practice, of its adherents over its adversaries? Can it be unreasonable to surmise, that those principles are founded in truth and rectitude, which amidst all the weakness and frailties of humanity, have enabled their believers to appear to so much advantage, when compared with their adversaries?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 85.]

SECTION XL.

Does not Christianity derive some Credibility from its being the only Revelation which can possibly be true?

We have remarked *, that there would exist a strong presumption against the truth of any Revelation which did not possess a manifest superiority over all which falsely made the same pretensions. Now this superiority, by the confession of our opponents, is inherent in Christianity when it is compared with Mahometanism, (the truth of Judaism, as an original Revelation being allowed by Christianity,) which is the only religion besides in the world professing to be a Divine Revelation.

It should be considered, then, that the question is not which out of several Revelations is true, but whether there has been *any* Revelation at all? For if the truth of

* See Part I. Sect. 43.

Christianity be not admitted, there is not the slightest probability that the claims of Mahometanism would be allowed in its stead.

Whatever degree of abstract probability, therefore, may attach to the general proposition, that *some* Revelation would be given by God to man, the entire force of this probability is now concentrated on the Christian Revelation. This is a consideration which not only narrows the labour of enquiry, but which diminishes the risk of mistake; for it is more likely that we can discover the truth, when it is thus brought to a single point, than if we had been first obliged to balance the contending claims of several rival candidates.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 86.]

SECTION XLI.

*Is not the Scripture Doctrine that we are saved by the free Mercy of God, strictly in Unison with the Suggestions of enlightened Reason? **

“ HE that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good which they can do upon earth.” † Such was the observation of a man of virtue, though no believer of Christianity, when reflecting on the utter disproportion which exists between the good actions of the best of men and a state of eternal happiness after death. “ You see by this,” he adds, “ my notions of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit Heaven by them.”

In the present state of human nature, it may be doubted whether a high degree of

* See Part I. Sect. 44.

† Franklin’s Correspondence, Letter I. p. 2.

dependence on our own merits be not altogether incompatible with any sentiments of piety towards God. Since man, as we have repeatedly observed, is now in the situation of a *penitent*, all his virtues must be founded in humility. Hence the proud language of ancient Stoicism was altogether unfitted to our nature. It was an attempt to make man talk like an innocent being who could depend upon himself; whereas he knows and feels that he is guilty and deserving of punishment; and that his only chance of escape arises out of the goodness and mercy of his Creator.

How far these views of our unworthiness are positively supported by the opinion of the ancient philosophers, may admit of considerable doubt. Perhaps it would be difficult to adduce any clear and decided testimony on this subject, though it might be inferred from the usual language of their prayers and from their sentiments respecting sacrifices and atonements. As soon as a man confesses that he is a sinner, he virtually confesses that he must depend on the mercy rather than on the strict justice of God.

It is these sentiments respecting our own natural demerits, which have rendered the morality of the Gospel at once so original and so efficacious. Casting down those high imaginations which were so little adapted to our fallen nature, Christianity commences its career by laying deeply the foundations of our repentance towards God, and then by offering us pardon and salvation through Jesus Christ. A religion so adapted to the meridian of our nature, has surely some strong recommendations to attract our attention. Whether it be fact or fiction, it is calculated to meet the exigencies of our situations. It approaches us with the *appearance* of truth on account of its suitability to our faculties and to our moral principles. How, then, can we refuse to look into the evidences of its history?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 87.]

SECTION XLII.

*Does not Christianity acquire some Credibility from the acknowledged Superiority of the Modern Systems of Natural Religion? **

It is a generally admitted fact, that from some cause, the ethical systems of modern times are far more complete and consistent than those of antiquity, more particularly in that part which relates to the duties and doctrines of natural theology. Now it is at least a possible supposition, that this superiority may in part have arisen out of the Christian Revelation, especially since it cannot well be attributed to any want of thought or talent in the ancient philosophers.

This supposition is rendered still more credible from considering that the perfection of our modern morality consists solely in its agreement with the moral precepts of Christianity. For as we have before observed †, whenever there is any variance in

* See Part I. Sect. 45.

† See Part II. Sect. 39.

this respect, it loses all its wonted aspect of superiority, and immediately falls back into the grossest errors and contradictions of the ancients.

There is one particular which has just been mentioned, which seems to have been tacitly adopted into all the modern systems of natural religion, which, I think, may be clearly traced to the doctrines of Revelation. It is this — that no man now thinks he can deserve eternal happiness as a matter of *right* due to him from the justice of God, but that he must simply rely upon his mercy. Though Mr. Blount, in his *Oracles of Reason*, would state this as one of his seven articles of natural religion, yet it may be doubted whether it were thus positively stated by any of the moralists of antiquity.

Upon the whole, it must be allowed that the mere fact of the great superiority of our modern systems of natural religion, is no little presumption in favour of the Christian Revelation. From some cause or other, it is plain that an individual of very moderate abilities may now draw up a system of practical ethics which shall far outshine in purity

and moral excellence the most elaborate treatises of the ancients. This is a singular phenomenon, and certainly deserves our enquiry; but the enquiry cannot be prosecuted without investigating the influence of Christianity on our habits of moral disquisition.

Another remarkable distinction between the morals of ancient and modern society, is to be found in the far greater attention which is now generally paid to the wants of the poor. Though hospitals and infirmaries were not quite unknown amongst the heathens *, yet they were comparatively of very rare occurrence. Is it not at least *probable* that we owe this superiority to our religion; and does not this probability call for an examination into its historical evidences ?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 88.]

* See Jortin on Christian Religion, p. 152.

SECTION XLIII.

Is there not some Credibility derived to Christianity from the Admissions and Eulogiums of its Adversaries?

IT is a matter of surprise that most of those writers who have distinguished themselves by their attacks upon the evidences of Christianity, have been loud and express in their commendations of its moral principles and effects. Since we can attribute these acknowledgments to nothing but the force of its intrinsic merit, I have thought that it might be serviceable to collect a few of their most striking opinions on the subject.

Lord *Herbert*, the earliest of our English deists, after many honourable compliments to the Scriptures, thus concludes his celebrated work on the Religion of the Gentiles : — “ I freely submit myself to the “ censure and judgment of the Catholic “ and orthodox church.”

Mr. *Hobbes* declares, “ that though the laws of nature be not laws as they proceed

from nature ; yet as they are given by God in Holy Scripture, they are properly called laws ; for the Holy Scripture is the voice of God, ruling all things by the greatest light.” See Leland’s Deistical Writers, vol. i. p. 35.

Mr. *Blount* has delivered his opinion respecting Christianity in the following words : — “ Undoubtedly, in our travels to another world, the common road is the safest ; and though deism is a good manuring of a man’s conscience, yet certainly, if sowed with Christianity, it will produce the most plentiful crop.” *Oracles of Reason*, p. 87—91.

Mr. *Tindal* affirms of Christianity, “ that when stript of the additions which policy, mistakes, and the circumstances of time have made to it, it is a most holy religion, and is so far from being indefensible, that it carries with it its own evidences.” *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, p. 422.

Doctor *Morgan*, in his *Moral Philosopher*, amidst many other encomiums on Christianity, thus expresses himself : — “ If the religion of nature, amidst the present pravity and corruption of mankind, was written

with sufficient strength and clearness on every man's heart, why might not a Chinese or an Indian draw up as good a system of natural religion as a Christian; and why have we not met with any such? Let us take Confucius, Zoroaster, Plato, Socrates, or the greatest moralist that ever lived without the light of Revelation, and it will appear that their best systems of morality are intermixed and blended with much superstition, and so many gross absurdities as quite eluded and defeated their main design." *Moral Philosopher*, p. 143.

Mr. *Chubb* acknowledges "that the writings of the Apostles contain excellent cautions, advices and instructions, which serve for the right conducting our affections and actions; and that it may be a piece of justice due to Christianity to acknowledge that it yields a much clearer light, and is a more safe guide to mankind than any other traditional religion, as being better adapted to improve and perfect human nature." See *Chubb's Posthumous Works*, vol. ii. p. 297.

Mr. *Hume* often professes to speak of Christianity with profound respect. Thus,

in the tenth section of his *Essay on Miracles*, he says, “that our most holy religion “ is founded on faith, not on reason ;” and he asserts “ that it gives him delight to have “ invented an argument which may confute “ the dangerous friends or the disguised “ enemies of the Christian religion.” The same observation will also apply to many of *Voltaire’s* remarks on *Pascal’s Thoughts*. Thus, in one place, he says, “The Christian religion, founded in truth, has no need of doubtful proofs ;” and in another, he says, “It is certain from faith and Revelation, things above the comprehension of man, that we are fallen ; though nothing is less apparent to reason.”

Lord *Bolingbroke* often declares his admiration of genuine Christianity :—“ He “ allows that the Gospel is in all cases one “ continued lesson of the strictest morality, “ of justice, benevolence, and of universal “ charity.” In another place, he affirms, “ that genuine Christianity was taught of “ God.” See other instances adduced by Leland in his *Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. p. 177, &c.

Mr. *Toland* constantly professes himself a Christian in his book styled “Christianity not Mysterious,” and asserts that it is his design to reconcile Christianity with natural religion.

Lord *Shaftesbury* wrote a preface to a selection of Dr. Whichcote’s Sermons, in which he expresses his hope “that those who had been prejudiced against Christianity, might be induced to like it better.” See Leland’s Deistical Writers, vol. i. p. 54.

Mr. *Woolston* professed his attachment to the mystical sense of Scripture in opposition to the literal, and speaks “of rescuing the Apostles and Evangelists, the Prophets and Fathers of the church, out of the hands of the preachers of the letter.” He charges his antagonists “with ignorance and malice “in representing him as a writer in favour “of infidelity, declaring that he is the “farthest of any from being engaged in “the cause of infidelity; that he writes, “not for the service of deism, which has “no place in his heart, but for the honour “of the holy Jesus and in defence of Christianity.” At the end of his fourth Dis-

course on the Miracles, he declares, “ that
“ his design is the advancement of the
“ Messiahship of the holy Jesus, to whom
“ be glory for ever, amen.” See Leland,
vol. i. letter 8., also Bishop Smalbroke. *

The eloquent eulogy of *Rousseau* is well known : — “ I will confess,” says he, “ that
“ the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me
“ with admiration. Peruse the works of
“ any philosopher ; how mean, how con-
“ temptible are they compared with the
“ Scriptures ! Is it possible that a book so
“ simple and yet so sublime, should be
“ merely the work of a man ?” &c. See his
Works, vol. v. p. 215.

Dr. *Franklin* acknowledges “ that the system of morality and religion, as left us by Jesus Christ, is not only the best which the world has ever seen, but which it is ever likely to see.” *Franklin’s Correspondence*, p. 130.

Even Mr. *Paine* professes a regard for the character of Christ. “ He was,” says he, “ a virtuous and amiable man. The

* See the Prefaces to his *Vindication of the Miracles*, vols. i. and ii.

morality which he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind." *Age of Reason*, part i. p. 5.

Mr. *Gibbon*, in several passages of his *History*, contrasts the morality of the Gospel with that of the Pagan idolatries; and attributes the rapid propagation of the Gospel, in no small degree, to the superior virtues of the early Christians. See the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. ii. chap. 15.

Doctor *Middleton* (who has been generally ranked amongst unbelievers), after contrasting the theology of Cicero with that of Scripture, thus expresses himself:— "When we reflect on all this, we must needs see abundant reason to be thankful to God for the divine light of his Gospel, which has revealed at last to babes and sucklings, what was hidden from the wise; and without pains of searching or danger of mistaking, has given us not only the hope but the assurance of happiness; and made us not only the believers, but the heirs of immortality." *Life of Cicero*, vol. iii. p. 354.

We need not stop to enquire, whether

these writers were sincere or not in the sentiments which they have here expressed. If they were sincere, it shows the moral excellence of that religion which could have wrung such acknowledgments even from its adversaries. If, upon the contrary, they feigned these opinions, what becomes of their honour and integrity? In either case, is it not a presumptive evidence in favour of our religion?

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 89.]

SECTION XLIV.

Is not the political Situation of the Jews a presumptive Argument in Favour of Christianity?

INDEPENDENT of all researches into prophecy, let any reflecting individual consider the past and present fortunes of this extraordinary people. In connection with his belief of a superintending Providence, let him consider whether there be not some reason to suppose that they are living under an extraordinary dispensation ; and that they are distinguished from all other nations of the earth, by some peculiarities which are not to be accounted for on the ordinary principles of our nature.

Here is a people who have long been exiled from their own country, yet who remain unmixed amidst other nations. In their countenances, their customs, their religion, they are unaltered by climate and situation. We may recognise a Jew wherever we meet

with him. Though they are to be met with in every part of the world, yet they are strangers and foreigners in every country ; and, however rich as individuals, yet they are not domesticated by their commercial intercourse. They are still a *peculiar* people.

Now, it being matter of public notoriety, that this nation stands intimately connected with the evidences of Christianity, that they have handed down to us the Old Testament, and were immediately concerned with the leading facts of the Gospel history, let any reflecting man consider whether there does not arise some degree of presumption in favour of Christianity from those peculiar circumstances, which have hitherto distinguished them from all other political societies ?

The very existence of the Jews, at the present day, as a distinct and separate nation, is against all our notions of probability. It appears to be little short of what we usually signify by a miracle. Then they seem evidently to lie under some symptoms of divine displeasure. There is a reproach

and obloquy attending them which can hardly be accounted for but on some extraordinary circumstances in their history. Whatever may be thought of the exact amount of such presumptive evidences, they must at least warrant any man's examination into that connection which subsists between Judaism and Christianity. Since it is notorious that there now exists a people, distinguished from all others by many remarkable circumstances, and that the history of this people is intimately connected with the authenticity of the Old and the New Testament, it becomes us, as mere political enquirers, to look into the relation which they bear to the evidences of the Christian Revelation.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 90.]

SECTION XLV.

Does not Christianity acquire some Credibility from the Originality and superior Force of its Incentives ?

THE same observation which has been made respecting the Divine attributes will apply to the practical duties of natural and revealed religion, that they are in both the same ; and that Christianity rather confirms and establishes what was before perceived to be right, than offers to unfold to us any new and original offices of morality.

This observation extends, in a general sense, to all our obligations, both civil and social ; yet there are some peculiarities in Christian ethics which are highly deserving of our notice, as being founded in a consummate knowledge of the human heart, and eminently calculated to promote the happiness and prosperity of mankind.

One of these, as has been often remarked, consists in placing the moral restraint on the emotions of the mind, rather than upon

the overt act. “ Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart.” Upon the same principle, hatred is connected with the crime of murder, according to the teaching of the founder of Christianity ; and the same reasoning will apply to all the other moral duties which are prescribed in the New Testament.

Another characteristic of Christian morals is its commendation of the mild and gentle above the strong and heroic virtues. Whereas the heathen philosophers had chiefly enlarged upon those features of the human character, which appear grand and awful, and which are principally useful in a state of war and commotion, it is the professed object of the inspired writers to insist chiefly on the value of the passive duties and virtues, to point out the excellence of humility and patience, and perseverance in well-doing, rather than to dwell upon the splendid achievements of heroes and conquerors.

Now, in all this, it must be allowed that there is a most consummate knowledge of

the human mind. Not only are the latter virtues of more real value in themselves, but of far more frequent demand in our intercourse with others ; and they are calculated, in a great measure, to supersede the necessity of those imperious qualities which formerly absorbed the admiration of poets and moralists. Hence, Mr. Hume is compelled to admit that “ the ancients would have considered as romantic and incredible the degree of humanity, clemency, order, and tranquillity to which we have attained in the administration of government in modern times.”

Another important distinction of Christian morality, is its having destroyed the distinction between the duties of perfect and imperfect obligation, thereby bringing forward to our view a large list of virtues which had previously wanted some adequate authority to bring them into action. “ Duties, you know,” says Bishop Watson to Mr. Paine, “ duties were distinguished by moralists into those of perfect and imperfect obligation. Does the Bible teach you nothing when it instructs you that this dis-

tinction is entirely done away? When it bids you put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any? These, and precepts such as these, you will look for in vain in the codes of Frederick or Justinian."

But a still more important distinction in Christian ethics arises out of the conjunction of moral duties with the sublimest doctrines of Revelation, so that it may be safely asserted, there is not one mystery in our religion which does not contain some new motive to practical holiness. Thus we are commanded to testify our love and gratitude towards the Author and Finisher of our faith, by displaying our love towards each other; and we are informed, that whatever kindness we show to our fellow-Christians shall be accounted as though it were done to our Heavenly Redeemer. A similar reflection might be made on that doctrine which instructs us to regard our bodies as the temples of the Holy Spirit; but it is superfluous to multiply illustrations of a

remark, which extends to the whole compass of Christian doctrines as viewed in connection with Christian duties.

The force and authority which attach to the precepts of the New Testament, as professing to come immediately from God, is also no slight advantage over the instructions of men like ourselves. It serves to sanction and impress the intrinsic excellence of the precepts. Hence arises also that briefness and simplicity, that statement of the general rule, free from all minute exceptions and nice limitations, which render the morality of the Gospel, so infinitely superior, for practical and popular instruction, to all the abstract and complex systems which are the result of human study and philosophy.

From these observations, it will appear that, though the morality of the Gospel be essentially the same as that which right reason and conscience have always recommended, yet that it has brought a host of new motives to reanimate and reinforce these convictions of our minds. But this was precisely what the exigencies of human

nature demanded. It has been the lamentation of legislators and moralists in all ages, that the law of the mind was overruled by the law of the members, and that what reason saw and approved, she could not execute.

It deserves, then, the consideration of every sober theist, whether so much wisdom and moral fitness may not be accounted as a probable evidence of a Divine Revelation—whether, upon every principle of reason and good sense, and of natural theology, he is not bound to institute an enquiry into the historical proofs of a religion, which is accompanied and connected with a moral system, that has far eclipsed, in purity and excellence and practical utility, all the wit and wisdom of human science.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 91.]

SECTION XLVI.

If the Founder of Christianity had not been Divine, would not this Religion have naturally tended to the Encouragement of Idolatry ?

UPON the supposition that God had appointed some Angel, say the highest created being, to die for the sins of the world, might it not have been clearly foreseen that divine worship would have been generally paid to him ? Taking mankind as they are at present constituted, would they not be universally so affected with gratitude towards any being who had conferred upon them such an inestimable benefit, that they would involuntarily be led to regard him with that religious love and veneration which would interfere with their love and duty towards God ?

This presumption is naturally placed at the close of this work, because it is connected with the entire drift and scope of

the argument ; the whole of which tends to demonstrate, that, whether Christianity be true or false, we are treated by it in a manner which is congenial and suitable to our nature. But how could this be the case, if it had rendered our very virtues the means of exposing us to error and delusion ? Could that religion have been adapted to our faculties, which would almost have necessarily seduced our allegiance and duty from the Supreme ?

According to the general tenor of our observations, Christianity is a dispensation so awful, dignified, and universal, that it may aspire, with some probability, to be the final cause of the creation. That such a dispensation should, in many respects, be mysterious and incomprehensible to reason, is so far from being any presumption against it, that it is necessarily implied in its truth. But if the author of this religion were not Divine, it would lose a great part of this grandeur and sublimity. Its moral incentives would then also be little stronger than those of natural religion : it would not be adapted for the reception of the poor ; it

would not have contained any atonement for our sins, &c. Now all these are presumptions which repeatedly occur in our arguments, and which are more or less interwoven with the whole texture of our reasonings.

But, lastly, we should observe, that the positive effects of Christianity are often referred to in this treatise, as a strong presumptive justification of its claims to a Divine Revelation. It is here taken for granted, that it has been the most extensive medium of diffusing the blessings of knowledge and civilisation, and of advancing the progress of natural theology. But how are such presumptions to be realised, if, upon the contrary, it has been the most comprehensive channel for diffusing an idolatrous worship? Upon the principles of a strict Unitarian, I should consider that the chief *religious* benefit which Christianity had afforded to mankind, arose from the indirect aid which it had given to the original establishment of Mahometanism.

Though it be not necessary, as we have already remarked, that a Revelation should

prove universally successful, or that it should accomplish all the good effects which it was calculated to produce, yet it is totally subversive of our notions of probability to believe that any dispensation coming from God should altogether fail of its intended advantages ; and that, instead of promoting the worship of the only true God, it should have been the most fruitful source of error and delusion.

It is surely in the highest degree improbable that a teacher sent from God should couch his assertions and doctrines in such dark and dubious language that the great majority of his followers should entirely mistake their meaning ; that a religion, intended emphatically for the poor, should be understood by only a *few* of the learned. These are improbabilities so strong, and so directly opposed to our natural sentiments, that they may be reasonably viewed as a strong presumptive argument against Unitarianism, allowing Christianity to be a real Revelation.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 92.]

SECTION XLVII.

*Is there not some Credibility derived to Christianity from its aspiring to be the final Cause of the Creation? **

“ THERE is a great inconsistency, as Professor Stewart remarks, in supposing that the moral laws which regulate the course of human affairs have no reference to any thing beyond the limits of the present scene, when all the bodies which compose the visible universe appear to be related to each other, as parts of one great physical system.”
Outlines of Moral Philosophy, p. 237.

Accordingly, to every observer of those marks of wisdom and design which are discoverable in the material world, the thought must often have occurred, what is the great aim and object of all this splendid machinery? †

* See Part I. Sect. 46.

† Εἰ δη τι τελος ἔστι τῶν πρακτῶν, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θελομενός, ταὶ ἄλλα δε δια τέλο, καὶ μη παντα δι' ἑτερον αἰρεμενός (προεισι γαρ εἴω γέεις ἀπειρον, ὡστ' εἴναι κενην καὶ μαλαισαν την ὄρεξιν) δῆλον ως ταῦτ' ἀν εἰν τάγαθου, καὶ τὸ ἀριστον. Aristot. Ethic. Nicom. lib. i. c. 2.

Now what we affirm is this, and the whole history of mankind becomes an evidence of our assertion, that either this aim, this object, must be found in a revelation, or that it is altogether unknown and unknowable by man. There is nothing short of a great moral and religious dispensation intended for the benefit and improvement of the whole human race, which appears worthy of being considered in this transcendantly important view.

But it has been already remarked *, that there is but one revelation which has any appearance of truth, indeed there is but one religion which professes to offer itself to mankind on the principle of its being a scheme of universal redemption. Whatever degree of abstract credibility, then, attaches to the general anticipation, that there is some great moral system pervading every part of nature, the whole amount of this credibility, as far as human induction can lead, inclines us to place it to the account of Christianity.

It has been already remarked, that Christianity has all the essentials of a universal

* See Part II. Sect. 40.

religion, and that though the knowledge of it be partial, yet that its benefits may be unlimited, and that it may have placed all mankind, whether Heathens or Christians, in a far better situation than they would otherwise have been in relation to eternal happiness. Nor is this a bare possibility, but it is a supposition positively countenanced by the Scriptures, as we have shown in Sect. 32.

There is nothing also incredible in the supposition, that the knowledge of man's fall and redemption may extend to the most distant parts of the universe, and that it may produce the most important moral effects upon different orders of intelligent beings. This supposition is also countenanced by the expressions of Scripture. The angels, we are told, "desire to look into the plan of our redemption, and they rejoice over every sinner that repenteth." Why, then, may they not be equally affected by those who do not repent? And why may not such hopes and apprehensions be necessary to preserve them in their innocence? "We know not," says Dr. Clark,

but “that as God has now discovered to us, in some measure, the fall and punishment of the evil angels to be a warning to us, so he may hereafter use the example of the punishment of wicked and incorrigible men to be the means of preserving other beings in their obedience.” Evidence of Nat. and Rev. Relig. p. 210.

“The mediation of Christ,” as Mr. Fuller argues, “is represented in Scripture as bringing the whole creation into union with the church and people of God. See Ephes. ch. i. v. 10., also Col. ch. i. v. 19. 20. And the language which is here used, supposes that the introduction of sin had effected a disunion between man and the other parts of God’s creation. It is natural to suppose it should do so. If a province of a great empire should rise up into rebellion against the lawful government, all communication between the inhabitants of such a province and the faithful adherents to order and obedience must be at an end. A line of separation would be immediately drawn by the sovereign, and all intercourse between one and the other prohibited.

Nor would it less accord with the inclination than with the duty of all the friends of righteousness to withdraw their connection from those who were in rebellion against the supreme authority and the general good. It must have been thus with regard to the holy angels on man's apostacy. Those who at the creation of our world had sung together, and even shouted for joy, would now retire in disgust and holy indignation." Fuller on Deism, p. 221.

Such views, it is hoped, may persuade some unbelievers of Christianity, not only to withdraw their prejudices, as if it were a limited and partial dispensation in regard to the present world, but to reflect that this religion may possibly constitute the moral plan of the universe itself; that though it be a Revelation intended more immediately for the benefit of mankind, yet that intelligent beings of every rank and capacity may be preserved in their allegiance by the knowledge of what has taken place in this little corner of God's dominions.

Nor is there any thing in these speculations which is not countenanced by the analogies of the soundest philosophy :—
“ Whilst the earth glides round her axle, she ministers to the alternate necessities of the animals dwelling upon her surface ; at the same time that she obeys the influence of those attractions which regulate the order of many thousand worlds. The relation of sleep to night is the relation of the inhabitants of the earth to the rotation of their globe ; probably it is more ; it is the relation to the system of which that globe is a part ; and still further, to the congregation of systems, of which theirs is only one. If this account be true, it connects the meanest individual with the universe itself ; a chicken roosting on its perch, with the spheres revolving in the firmament.” Paley’s Natural Theology, p. 297.

[See Notes and Illustrations, No. 93.]

Recapitulation of the Evidence.

IT is scarcely necessary to remark, that the same kind of harmony and agreement which pervade the presumptive arguments that compose the former part of this work, will also be found to extend to those which we have subsequently adduced. If there be any difference, the agreement will here be found still more close and complete, because the probabilities which were before mentioned as only likely to occur in a *supposed* Revelation, are here detailed with more precision and minuteness, as having been actually realized in the *Christian* Revelation.

It may be expedient, however, to illustrate these observations by one or two specimens selected from the general mass. Thus in Sect. 7. it is mentioned, as a presumptive argument in favour of Christianity, that it asserts man to have been originally created in a state of innocence. This presumption is here founded on our natural sentiments respecting the Divine

Holiness. But in Sect. 8. it is mentioned, as another presumption in favour of Christianity, that it asserts our *fall* from this state of innocence. Now this is a presumption founded on a matter of fact, viz. that we are not now in the state before mentioned. These presumptions, then, mutually lend and borrow force from each other. The same presumption is also assisted by Sect. 20., which proceeds on the suitability of some atonement, as required by the present wants and convictions of our nature; also with Sect. 22., which connects our state of moral trial with the propriety of a suffering Redeemer; also with Sect. 31., which relates to the supposed universality of the Christian dispensation; also with Sect. 41., which inculcates our dependance on the mercy of God, rather than on our own merits; and with Sect. 46., which proposes the Christian Revelation as the most probable final cause of the creation.

To mention another example, distinct from the former, it is shown, in Sect. 10., that Christianity derives some credibility from its general agreement with the facul-

ties of the human mind, and with our external situations in the world. But in Sect. 14. the same agreement is still further shown by the relative manner in which the Deity is made known to us; also in Sect. 15., by the appointment of a mediator; also in Sect. 19., by its proposing the example of its founder to our imitation; also in Sect. 20., by the atonement which it professes to offer for our sins; also in Sect. 21., by its promise of spiritual aid; also in Sect. 23. and 24., by its confirmation of the immortality of the soul, and of a state of eternal rewards and punishments, &c. &c. But it is unnecessary to dwell longer on these particulars. Of the following tables, the first shows the coincidences between the presumptions which are contained in the second part; and the other compares the coincidences of these two parts together.

A Table of the Coincidences and Connections of the Presumptive Arguments which are contained in the Second Part.

Sect.

1. and 2. The force of these presumptions is illustrated by every succeeding section.
- 3.—4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21. 23. 24. 25. 26. 28, &c.
- 4.—6. 13. 16. 18. 20. 21. 22. 26. 28. 29. 30. 34. 35. 37. 40. 45.
- 5.—3. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13, &c.
- 6.—2. 3. 4. 7. 8. 11. 12. 25. 28. 29. 30. 32. 35. 36. 37. 40. 42. 44. 47.
- 7.—2. 3. 5. 8. 9. 10. 11. 20. 23. 24. 26. 30. 31. 32. 36. 38. 40. 41. 42. 47.
- 8.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22, &c.
- 9.—3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 10., and by every succeeding section.
- 10.—Consult every section.
- 11.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 9. 10. 12. 14. 21. 28. 30. 31. 32. 36. 37. 38. 40. 41, &c.
- 12.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 10. 11. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 30. 41. 47.
- 13.—3. 4. 11. 14. 15. 16. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 26. 30. 34. 41. 42. 47.
- 14.—2. 3. 5. 9. 10. 11. 13. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21. 22. 26. 29. 30. 34. 45.
- 15.—2. 3. 5. 9. 10. 14. 16. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 26. 31. 32. 34. 41. 42. 47.
- 16.—The same.
- 17.—4. 6. 7. 13. 14. 15. 16. 18. 19. 20. 22. 26. 28. 30. 45. 47.

Sect.

18.—4. 7. 15. 16. 17. 19. 20. 22. 23. 26. 27. 30. 34. 42.
43. 46. 47.

19.—2. 3. 5. 7. 10. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 20. 22. 23. 26.
27. 29. 30. 34. 42. 46.

20.—2. 4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 22.
24. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32, &c.

21.—2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 8. 12. 13. 14. 26. 30. 37. 38. 42. 45. 47.

22.—5. 10. 15. 16. 18. 19. 20. 26. 45. 46. 47.

23.—2. 4. 5. 10. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 22. 24. 28. 29.
30. 31. 32. 34. 42. 45. 46, &c.

24.—2. 5. 7. 8. 23. 25. 31. 32. 33. 34. 42. 45. 47.

25.—5. 6. 8. 9. 10. 23. 24. 31. 32. 47.

26.—3. 4. 5. 10. 13. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23.
24. 30. 42. 45. 47.

27.—3. 5. 9. 10. 19. 20. 22. 26. 28. 29. 31. 34. 37. 46.

28.—1. 3. 4. 17. 27. 30.

29.—2. 3. 5. 9. 10. 19. 21. 23. 24. 30. 31. 32. 34. 35.
36. 37. 38. 42. 44. 45, &c.

30.—2. 4. 5. 10. 11. 12. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 26. 29. 34.
35. 40. 42. 47.

31.—2. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 21.
22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28, &c.

32.—The same.

33.—5. 8. 9. 10. 24. 36. 37. 39. 43.

34.—2. 3. 5. 9. 10. 11. 14. 15. 16. 19. 20. 23. 24. 25. 27.
29. 30. 32. 37. 38. 45, &c.

35.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12, &c.

36.—3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 19. 22. 31. 32. 33. 35. 37. 38.
39. 42. 44. 45. 47.

37.—2. 4. 5. 6. 8. 9. 10. 11. 20. 21. 23. 28. 29. 30. 31.
32. 34. 35. 36. 38, &c.

38.—2. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 31. 32. 34. 35. 36. 39. 40. 43. 45.
46. 47.

39.—2. 4. 5. 8. 9. 33. 35. 36. 37. 38. 40. 42. 43. 45.

Sect.

40.—2. 4. 6. 7. 8. 11. 20. 22. 23. 24. 25. 30. 31. 34. 35.
36. 37. 38. 42. 47.

41.—2. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 14. 15. 16. 20. 28. 31. 32. 34. 47.

42.—5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 19. 23. 24. 30. 34.
35. 36. 38. 39. 41. 43. 45.

43.—2. 3. 5. 6. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 19. 23. 24. 29. 30. 31.
34. 35. 36. 38. 39, &c.

44.—4. 18. 19. 20. 22. 29. 30. 31. 39. 40. 46. 47.

45.—2. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.
23. 24. 26. 29. 30, &c.

46.—2. 4. 5. 10. 11. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 22. 23.
26. 27. 30. 31. 32. 40. 42, &c.

47.—2. 5. 6. 7. 8. 11. 12. 14. 15. 16. 17. 20. 21. 22. 23.
24. 25. 26. 28. 29. 30. 31, &c.

*A Table showing the Coincidences and Connections between
the Second and the First Parts of the Work.*

Part II.

Part I.

1. and 2. These sections are more or less illustrated by every other.
- 3.—3. 4. 5. 6. 7, &c.
- 4.—4. 21. 23. 25. 26. 29. 31. 32. 33. 37. 43. 44. 46.
- 5.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 16. 17. 18. 19, &c.
- 6.—2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 19. 25. 27. 28. 31. 32. 33. 34, &c.
- 7.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19, &c.
- 8.—3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17, &c.
- 9.—*Passim.*
- 10.—*Passim.*
- 11.—5. 7. 20. 21. 22. 23. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 32. 33. 34. 37. 38. 40. 41. 42, &c.
- 12.—5. 7. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 25. 26. 27. 28. 32. 34. 37. 41. 44, &c.
- 13.—3. 4. 19. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 29. 32. 36. 44. 46.
- 14.—2. 3. 4. 5. 19. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 32. 33. 34. 37. 38. 44.
- 15.—2. 3. 4. 5. 17. 18. 19. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 29. 30. 34. 37. 44.
- 16.—The same.
- 17.—4. 7. 17. 18. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 29. 32. 33.
- 18.—4. 18. 19. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 29. 37. 43. 44.
- 19.—2. 3. 4. 5. 18. 19. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 27. 31. 33. 34. 37. 38. 43. 44.
- 20.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16, &c.

Part II.

21.—2. 3. 4. 5. 17. 18. 19. 26. 29. 34. 37. 43. 44. 45. 46.
 22.—3. 4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 16. 17. 18. 19. 21. 22.
 23. 24. 25. 26. 29. 34. 37, &c.
 23.—2. 3. 4. 5. 16. 17. 18. 19. 23. 24. 25. 27. 28. 29.
 31. 33. 34. 37. 38. 41. 42, &c.
 24.—3. 4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 16. 17. 18. 19. 25. 26.
 27. 28. 32. 33. 34. 37, &c.
 25.—3. 4. 5. 6. 12. 27. 28. 32. 33. 34. 39. 41. 46.
 26.—2. 3. 4. 5. 21. 22. 23. 25. 26. 27. 29. 32. 34. 35.
 36. 37. 43. 44. 45.
 27.—3. 5. 19. 22. 25. 30. 31. 33. 34. 37. 38. 40. 43. 44.
 28.—3. 4. 5. 6. 9. 10. 11. 12. 16. 22. 24. 30. 31. 32.
 34. 37. 38. 39. 40, &c.
 29.—2. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12, &c.
 30.—2. 4. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 31. 32.
 38, &c.
 31.—2. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15, and
 throughout.
 32.—The same.
 33.—4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.,
 and throughout.
 34.—2. 3. 5., and more or less by every succeeding
 section.
 35.—2. 3. 4. 5, &c.
 36.—3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 16. 17. 19. 20. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 32.
 33. 34. 35, &c.
 37.—4. 5. 6. 20. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40.
 41. 42. 43, &c.
 38.—2. 3. 4. 5. 6, &c. 16. 17. 18. 19. 24. 27. 28. 31.
 34. 35. 36. 37. 38, &c.
 39.—3. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 19,
 &c.
 40.—4. 5. 6. 7. 8, &c. 16, &c.

Part II.

41.—3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8., and more or less by every section.
42.—2. 3. 4. 6. 7, &c. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 22. 24. 25.
26. 27. 28, &c.
43.—3. 4. 5. 6. 7, &c. 16. 17. 19. 20, &c.
44.—4. 23. 25. 31. 32. 35. 36. 38. 39. 40. 41. 43. 46.
45.—2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 17. 18. 19. 21. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28,
&c.
46.—2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 16. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26.
29. 30. 31. 32. 33, &c.
47.—2. 4. 6. 7. 8, &c. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 19. 20. 21. 22.
23. 24. 25, &c.

Part I.

NOTES

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

It may be proper to offer a few remarks on an attack which has been lately made by a popular living writer, on the propriety of employing presumptive reasoning on the subject of Revelation. Dr. Chalmers, in his volume on the Evidences of Christianity, has thought fit to disclaim altogether the authority of that species of evidence which is here brought forward to illustrate the truth and wisdom of Christianity. He deems it inconsistent with the sober spirit of inductive science to enter upon any other enquiries on this subject, than those which relate to the historical facts of the Christian Revelation.

As this is a grave charge, which directly affects the value and solidity of the evidence which is here adduced, I shall make no apology

for considering the grounds on which it rests. But, first, we may remind the eloquent author, that he stands convicted of error by subsequently employing this kind of evidence in his "Discourses on the Christian Revelation, as viewed in connection with Modern Astronomy." Nor do his high commendations of Bishop Butler's Analogy, in his former treatise, appear very consistent with a line of argument which, if correct, would entirely destroy the value of that inestimable work.

The charge itself rests upon the following assertion, "that we have experience of man, but no experience of God." If this assertion were correct, we should indeed allow the whole of the argument. But is it true, that creation has afforded us no experience of God's dealings with mankind? Are not the attributes of the Deity engraven upon Nature? Is not his invisible power and godhead discoverable by the things which we see and witness around us?

But we may ask still more pertinently, Is not the finger of the Creator to be seen in the workmanship of man? Are not his moral attributes to be traced in the formation of our minds, in the disposition of our faculties, and in his treatment of us as moral and accountable agents?

Surely, if we may venture — as this author admits — to decide upon that internal evidence

by which we judge of the candour and veracity of the agents who were employed in the construction of Christianity, “ if we feel and understand the powerful evidence which lies in the time, the manner, the circumstances, the number, and the agreement of the witnesses,” we may also with equal propriety collate the different parts of the Divine administration ; we may compare our experience as men with our treatment as Christians ; we may point out the correspondences which subsist between faith and reason, and trace the conformity of that style and manner which may so reasonably be expected to pervade the works of the same Author, when they are addressed to the same readers, and conducive to the same general intentions.

Much, therefore, as we are disposed to approve of this writer’s observations on that high *a priori* spirit which would substitute speculation for fact, and the ease and pride of dogmatism for the labour and humility of induction, yet we cannot but suspect that he has rather mistaken the bearing of his argument when he would attempt to show that it is altogether illogical to compare the phenomena of nature and the rules of God’s providential government with the administration of his spiritual kingdom. If it be true, as Dr. Chalmers admits, that the inductive philosophy has been successfully applied

to intellectual subjects by Reid and Stewart, surely we may make use of this philosophy in our illustrations of the Christian Revelation. A well-arranged series of observations on the coincidences of natural and revealed religion, an enquiry into the constitution of the human mind as connected with the principles and doctrines of Christianity, is as much dependent on the spirit of inductive science as any other observations which depend on a diligent investigation and comparison of facts. It is a collection of real phenomena adduced in behalf of Christianity to show there are plain and visible marks of resemblance between these two dispensations. There is this peculiar advantage, indeed, connected with this kind of reasoning, that it relates immediately to these faculties which must be equally employed about the works and the word of God, and which may therefore be reasonably supposed to bear a corresponding analogy to both.

But the great argument against denying a legitimate use of reason in judging of the doctrines as well as of the evidences of Christianity, arises out of the manifest dangers with which we are menaced unless some scope may be here allowed to our intellectual faculties. How is our religion to be esteemed a *reasonable* service, if it is to be sullenly admitted upon the force of

mere authority? How can we confute the objections of Deists against the reasonableness of these doctrines, unless we are allowed to judge of their reasonableness? How can we put down the errors of enthusiasts, unless we may confute them by rational as well as by scriptural arguments? The use of reason is not to be denied in matters of religion, because unbelievers would use it irrationally; nor can it answer any good purpose to exalt the historical evidences of Revelation at the expense of those moral convictions which are equally valuable and equally necessary to establish its credibility.

To all, indeed, who reflect upon the nature of man, this division of the evidences of Christianity, does but correspond to the two great constituent parts of our humanity. To dispute whether the external or the internal proofs of Revelation be the more important, is but, in other words, to dispute whether the will or the intellect, the heart or the understanding, be the most essential principles of human nature. Such a controversy is equally useless and unphilosophical; both make up the system of our faculties; both are concerned in our reception of moral evidence. We may apply to them the observation which was made upon our closest domestic connections,—“ That which God hath

joined together, let no man attempt to put asunder.” *

Let every kind of evidence be estimated in a proper manner : this is to act up to the spirit of the Baconian logic : not to depreciate moral evidence because it is not of the same nature as that of external facts, but to allow every species of truth its proper and relative value.† Sad, indeed, would be the situation of Christianity if it were thus cut off from all association with moral conviction ; for then the great bulk of the people could never become persuaded of its truth. “ What is the ground,” asks Bishop Horsley, “ upon which the faith of the generality of Christians, in the present ages, is built, who all believe what they have not seen ? I say of the generality of Christians ; for whatever it may be which gives faith its merit in the sight of God, it is surely to be looked for, not in any thing peculiar to the faith of the learned, but in the common faith of the plain illiterate believer. What then is the ground of his conviction ? Is it the historical evidence of the facts recorded in the gospels ? Perhaps no facts of an

* See the connection and consistency of these kinds of evidence, admirably illustrated by Dr. Tatham in his “ Chart and Scale of Truth,” particularly chap. 10. and 11. vol. i.

† See Tatham’s Chart and Scale of Truth, vol. i. p. 73.

equal antiquity may boast an historical evidence equally complete, and without some degree of this evidence, there would be no faith. Yet it is but a branch of the proof; and, if I mistake not, far from the most considerable part; for the whole evidence lies open but to a small proportion of the Christian world, &c. “What then,” he continues, “is the great foundation of proof to those who are little read in history, and are ill qualified to decypher prophecy, and compare it with the original records of mankind? Plainly this, which the learned and the ignorant may equally comprehend; the intrinsic excellence of the doctrines and the purity of the precept; a doctrine which conveys to the rudest understandings, just and exalted notions of the Divine perfections; exacts a worship purged of all hypocrisy and superstition, the most adapted to the nature of him who offers, the most worthy (if ought can be worthy) of the Being that accepts it; prescribes the most rational duties, things intrinsically the best and the most conducive to private and public good; proposes rewards adequate to the vast desires and capacities of the rational soul; promises mercy to infirmity, without indulgence to vice; holds out pardon to the penitent offender, in that particular way, which secures to a frail imperfect race the blessings of a mild govern-

ment, and secures to the majesty of Heaven all the useful ends of punishment; and builds this scheme of redemption on a history of man and providence; of man's original corruption, and the various interpositions of providence for his gradual recovery; which clears up many perplexing questions respecting the origin of evil; the unequal distribution of present happiness and misery; and the disadvantage on the side of virtue in this constitution of things, which seems inexplicable on any other principles.”*

I need offer no apology for the length of this quotation, since it precludes the necessity of any further reply. It would be in vain to attempt to sum up the names of the numerous authors who have written on this subject, all of whom, either partially or tacitly, admit the propriety of using such evidence in favour of Christianity. See however, *Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity*; *MacLaine's Letters to Jenyns*, Letters ii. and iii.; *Beattie's Evidences*, vol. ii. sect. 4.; *Simpson's Internal Evidence of Christianity*; *Bishop Chandler's Introduction to his Defence of Christianity*; *Clarke's Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. xiii.; *Watson's Popular Evidences*, part. ii.; *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. i. ch. 18.; *Paley's Evidences*,

* *Horsley's Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 246 — 249.

vol. ii. part 2.; *Warburton's Divine Legation*, book 9. c. 5.; *Leland*, vol. i. ch. 22. and vol. ii. ch. 13.; *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part 2. ch. 5. and ch. 8.; *Porteus's Evidences*, prop. 5. and 6.; *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 219, 221. and Appendix, p. 42—47.

For more accurate information on that species of argument which is here brought forward to illustrate Christianity, I would beg leave to refer to the masterly Introduction of Bishop *Butler to his Analogy*; also to the works of Bishop *Brown* on “the *Procedure, Extent, and Limits of the Human Understanding*,” and to his elaborate treatise, entitled “*Things Divine and Supernatural conceived by Analogy with things Natural and Human*.^{*} There are many valuable remarks in the works of Dr. *Reid* on this kind of Evidence. See also *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. i. sect. 3. chap. 4. p. 54. See vol. i. book 1. chap. 1. Also in *Bonnet's Enquiries concerning Christianity*, essay 1. ch. 4.; also vol. ii. essay 7. ch. 3. But the most valuable observations which have lately been given to the public on the subject of analogical reasoning, are to be found in vol. ii. ch. 4. sect. 4. of Professor *Stewart's Philosophy of the Human Mind*. See also *Locke*, book 4. ch. 16. and 17.

* This work is by mistake attributed to Bishop *Butler* in *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. i. p. 56.

Buffier's First Truths, part 1.; *Beattie's Essay on Truth*, part 1. ch. 2. sect. 6. and 7. There are some excellent reasonings upon analogy as applicable to the Christian Revelation in *Felton's Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 200—237. Also in *Bishop Law's Notes on King's Origin of Evil*, ch. 1. sect. 3. See also *Fuller's "Gospel its own Witness,"* part 2. ch. 5. Also in *Bishop Fowler's "Design of Christianity,"* reprinted in *Watson's Theological Tracts*.

Upon the nature and extent of the connections of natural and revealed religion, the reader may consult with advantage the following authorities : — *Balguy's Moral Tracts*, p. 383—405.; *Sherlock's Discourses*, vol. iii. serm. xiii. p. 318.; also vol. iv. p. 140.; also *Bishop Taylor's Preface to his Life of Christ*; *Scott's Christian Life*, vol. ii. chap. 2.; *Locke on Human Understanding*, book iv. chap. 18.; *Warburton's Divine Legation*, vol. ii. book 3.; *Leland's Introductory Discourse* to his admirable work on the *Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*; *Bishop Wilkin's Natural Religion*; *Bishop Gastrell's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*; *Bishop Leng's ditto*; and *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*; *More's Euchiridion Ethicum*, &c.

The analogy of Christianity to the natural and moral government of the world is shown by *Simp-*

son in his “*Internal Evidences*,” part ii. ch. 3. sect. 2.; *Warburton’s Divine Legation*, book ix. ch. 1. p. 77. The great advantage of connecting the doctrines of Christianity with our rational and moral faculties, is shown by *Grove* in the introduction to his *Moral Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 1—50. See also *Tatham’s Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii. ch. 2. “The real use of natural theology,” says Mr. *Sumner*, “is to show the strong probability of that being true which Revelation declares.” See his *Records of the Creation*, preface.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

PART I. No. 1.

On the Possibility of a Revelation.

“ THAT there is nothing directly absurd or contradictory to reason, in the supposition of the possibility of a revelation given from God, for the information and improvement of mankind, is evident, from its having been the opinion and the hope of the wisest and best of mankind, in all ages, and in various nations. Socrates, Plato, Confucius, and others, the bright and shining lights of antiquity, have given their authority to the opinions of the probability of a revelation from God.” — *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, book iv. p. 320.

“ That God can, if he thinks fit, make a revelation of himself and his will to man, in an extraordinary way different from the discoveries made by themselves, in the more natural and ordinary use of their own natural faculties and persons, appears to be so evident, that I do not see how any man who believes in God and

Providence, can reasonably deny it : for if the power of God be almighty, it must extend to whatever does not imply a contradiction, which cannot be pretended in this case." *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of Revelation.* vol. i. Introductory discourse. "Infinite power, though it does not extend to contradictions, performs with ease whatever is possible in its nature." *Farmer, on Miracles,* chap. i. sect. 2. "Nothing can be possible to which there is not some corresponding power that might effect it." *King's Origin of Evil,* chap. 1. sect. 3. See also *Locke on Human Understanding,* book iv. chap. 7. sect. 7. ; *Law on Space,* chap. 1. ; also chap. 7. sect. 7. ; *Doddridge's Lectures,* Proposition 91. ; *Clarke's Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion,* p. 194. ; *Leng's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures,* p. 324—334. also *Leland's Deistical Writers,* vol. i. letter 1. and vol. ii. letter 36. ; also against *Tindal,* vol. i. introduct.

The possibility of a divine revelation has been generally admitted by infidel writers :—thus *Morgan* allows, "that God may, if he thinks fit, communicate his will by immediate inspiration, or superior illumination ; yea, and that what he thus communicates, may come with evidence equal to a mathematical demonstration." See *Leland,* vol. i. letter 10. The same is allowed by Mr. *Chubb.* See letter 13. p. 222.

Also by *Bolingbroke*, vol. ii. letter 27. The possibility of a revelation is shown by *Butler*, in his *Boyle's Lectures*, towards the end. Also by *Ibbot*, serm. 2. at the same lectures. Also by *Williams* in his first sermon at ditto; *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii. p. 15—17; *Jenkins on Christianity*, vol. ii. part 1. ch. i.

No. 2.

On the Desirableness of a Revelation.

Upon the subject of this chapter, see *Beattie's Evidences of the Christian Religion*, chap. 1. Also *Doddridge's Lectures*, propositions 92 and 93., in which it is shown, that the circumstances of mankind are such as to render a divine revelation highly expedient and desirable, and that there is some reason to hope that God would grant such assistance. See also *Foster against Tindal*, ch. 1.

There are numerous passages cited by Bishop *Leng* in his twelfth sermon, p. 363—371. also p. 490—492., to show that the ancients greatly desired the aid of a revelation. Others are to be found collected by *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, proposition 7. p. 153. Also by *Leland*, in his *Necessity and Advantage of Revelation*, vol. i. ch. 21.; *Baxter's*

Reasons of Christianity, part 2. ch. 1. The obligations which lie upon a serious Deist to enquire into the truth of a revelation, are stated by Bishop *Leng*, p.18—25.; also in his tenth Sermon, p. 292.

The various difficulties of attaining religious truth, by means of abstract reasoning, are pointed out by *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. 5. 6. and 7. See also *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. serm. 13. The expediency of a revelation is shown by *Williams* in his first sermon at *Boyle's Lectures*; *Bonnet's Enquiries concerning Christianity*, book 1. chap. 2. The needfulness of a revelation is shown by *Bishop Conybeare*, vol. ii. serm. 5., also in his *Defence of Revealed Religion*, chap. 7.; *Porteus's Evidences*, prop. 1. See also *Whitby on the Necessity and Usefulness of the Christian Revelation*, a valuable work, though little known.

No. 3.

On the Teachableness of the Human Mind, as affording a Substratum for the Evidence of a Revelation.

For a confirmation of the general doctrines which are here advanced, I would beg leave to refer the reader to the first and second books of

Locke on Human Understanding; also to *Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things*, chap. 2. 3. and 4., who has treated this subject with the greatest acuteness and originality. See also *Skelton's Deism Revealed*, vol i. dialogue the second. “Nam neque tam acris acies in naturis hominum et ingeniis, ut res tantas quisquam, nisi monstratas, possit videre; neque tanta tamen obscuritas, ut eas non penitus acri vir ingenio cernat, si modo adspexerit.” *Cic. de Orat.* lib. iii. c. 31. See *Bishop Leng's 6th Sermon at Boyle's Lectures*, in which this subject is discussed with great ability; also *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, vol. i. ch. 1. and vol. ii. part 2. ch. 1.; also *Felton's Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 48—67.; *Jenkin on the Christian Religion*, vol. i. p. 407. &c.; also *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 363—374. Concerning that principle of the human mind by which we are disposed to rely upon the testimony of others, see Dr. *Reid's Enquiry*, ch. 6. sect. 24., *Essays*, vol. ii. ch. 5. c. 10.; *Beattie on Truth*, part i. ch. 2. sect. 8.; *Buffier's First Truth*, part i. ch. 19.; *Smith's Moral Sentiments*, part vii. sect. 4.; *Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric*, book i. ch. 5. sect. 3.; *Campbell's Essay on Miracles*, part. i. sect. 1.; *Stewart's Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, p. 270. *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol. ii. p. 251.

Also Price's *Review of the Question of Morals*, p. 151—170.; and Tatham's *Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. i. ch. 10., where this subject is treated with great acuteness.

A revelation being necessarily founded in faith upon the Divine veracity, applies itself to those principles of the human mind whereby we are disposed to repose faith in testimony, and to be sincere in our mutual communications. “That there is,” says Stewart on the Human Mind, “a natural or instinctive principle of veracity, has been remarked by many authors; and there is a corresponding principle determining us to repose faith in testimony, which bears a striking analogy, both in its origin and its final cause, to our instinctive expectation of the continuance of the physical laws of nature.” * This latter principle, which is by nature unlimited, we afterwards learn to correct in the progress of reason and experience. But as applied to our reliance upon the *Divine* veracity, it needs no such correction; and therefore it always remains in its original force; the sole enquiry being confined to the evidences of such revelation, and not to the credit which is due to the author of this revelation, supposing it to be real. See *Whitby on the Necessity of Revelation*, p. 45.

* *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, sect. 377—379.

These remarks will, I trust, be sufficient to show, that we are justified in connecting the evidences of Christianity with the principles of the inductive philosophy of the human mind; and that we are not mistaken in our hope of having opened a new and valuable species of presumptive argument in favour of revelation. Should this alliance betwixt faith and philosophy be founded on just and equitable principles, it will conduce equally to the advantage of the contracting parties: whilst it imparts solidity to our intellectual enquiries, it will bestow additional force and accuracy on our arrangements of the moral and historical proofs of our divine religion.

No. 4.

Upon the Evidence required to authenticate a Revelation.

“ In what way can a revelation be made known but by miracles? In none which we are able to conceive. Consequently, in whatever degree it is probable, or not very improbable, that a revelation should be communicated to mankind at all, in the same degree it is probable, or not very improbable, that miracles should be wrought. Therefore, when miracles

are related to have been wrought, in the promulgation of a revelation manifestly wanted, and, if true, of inestimable value, the improbability which arises from the miraculous nature of the things related is not greater than the original improbability that such a revelation should be imparted by God." *Paley's Evidences*, vol. i. p. 8.

That miracles are the proper evidences of *revealed religion*, as distinguished from *natural*, is shown by *Chandler*, in his *Vindication of Christ. Relig.* part i. ch. 2. See also *Leng's* 13th and 14th Sermons at *Boyle's Lectures*; and *Clarke's Evidences of Nat. and Rev. Relig.* prop. 9. and prop. 14.; *Bp. Sherlock's Discourses*, vol. i. Serm. 10.; *Hartley's Observations on Man*, vol. ii. ch. 2. prop. 28.; *Leland against Tindal*, vol. ii. ch. 3. also against *Morgan*, ch. i.; *Chandler's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 4.; *Rogers's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 4. and 5.; *Simpson's Internal Evidences*, part ii. ch. 1. and 2.; *Lord Hale's Primitive Origination*, sect. iv. ch. 7.; *Doddridge's 105 Lecture*; *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ*, book ii. ch. 9.; *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. ch. 2. and ch. 4.; also *Price's Dissert. on Providence*, p. 72—84.; *Campbell on Miracles*, part i. sect. 5. and part 2. sect. 1.; *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, p. 706—710.; *Brown against Tindal*, p. 103.; *Foster against Tindal*, p. 61—64.

On the tradition of the ancients concerning miracles, see *Barrow's Works*, vol. ii. Serm. 9. ; *Gurdon's Boyle's Lectures*, Serm. xii. p. 338—341.

As to the necessity of some *internal* evidence, distinct from miracles, accompanying any revelation, see the following authors : *Doddridge's Lectures*, prop. 95. “ It may be seen that a divine revelation can contain nothing which is apparently contrary to the light of nature ; because that is the law of God, and he is too wise and too faithful to contradict himself.” So *Butler* : “ If in any revelation there be found any passages, the seeming meaning of which is contrary to natural religion, we may most certainly conclude such seeming meaning not to be the real one.” *Analogy*, part ii. ch. 1. The same subject is treated by *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Nat. and Rev. Relig.* prop. 9. ; also by *Duchal* in his *Presumptive Evidences of the Christ. Relig.* Serm. ii. ; also by *Skelton* in his *Deism Revealed*, Dialogue 6. ; also *Leng's Sermons*, p. 409. That Bishop *Horsley* was of the same opinion, is evident from his 42d Sermon, vol. iii. : “ This excellence of the Christian doctrine, considered in itself, as without it no external evidence of revelation could be sufficient, so it gives to those who are qualified to perceive it, that *internal* proba-

bility to the whole scheme, which the external evidence, in that proportion of it in which it may be supposed to be understood by common men, may be well allowed to be complete." p. 249. See also *Locke on Human Understanding*, book iv. ch. 18. sect. 5. and the Introductory Note in reply to Dr. Chalmers's *Evidences of the Christian Revelation*; *Bonnet's Philosophical Enquiries concerning Christianity*, ch. 8. book 5.; *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 302.

No. 5.

Agreement with the Circumstances of Mankind.

Upon the wonderful agreement which subsists between the doctrine of Scripture and the wants and requirements of human nature, I cannot do better than refer the reader to the admirable observations of *Mr. Bates*, in the second section of his *Rural Philosophy*. See also *Clarke's Evidences of Nat. and Rev. Religion*, prop. 10—13. Concerning the evidence with which a revelation would be probably attended, see *Doddridge's Lectures*, prop. 95. and 97. 1st, He says, it can contain nothing contradictory to the light of nature: 2dly, it would confirm the most important doctrines of natural religion; particularly assuring us of the method

of pardon for our sins : 3dly, it would discover some doctrines not attainable by natural reason, but in nowise inconsistent with it : 4thly, it would hint at some new discoveries concerning the Divine Being : 5thly, that it would on the whole be plain and intelligible : 6thly, that it would promote virtuous practice : 7thly, that it would humble human pride. Such are the *internal* evidences with which he thinks such a revelation would be attended. The following are stated by him as amongst its probable *external* attestations : 1st, that it would be published by men of eminent piety and virtue : 2dly, that some *superior* spirit would be employed as its messenger : 3dly, that it should be attended with beneficial miracles : 4thly, that it would be published by those who could lend it no *political* influence : 5thly, that it would be gradual and progressive : 6thly, that it should amaze by its rapid success at its first promulgation : 7thly, that when its miracles ceased, other and sufficient moral and historical evidences should supply their place : 8thly, that part of its evidences should arise from its opponents.—That Christianity is fitted to a state of trial, see *Atterbury's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. 6., and the authors referred to in No. 56. “ That scheme which best pursues the great design and end of nature, discernible in the formation

of all men, is most likely to proceed from the Author of nature," &c. See the *Introduction to Bishop Chandler's Vindication of his Defence of Christianity*, p. 9—16. ; also *Sumner's Records of the Creation*, vol. ii. part 3., where this subject is treated with much ability.

No. 6.

A Revelation at the first Creation.

The probability of a Revelation at the first creation of man, is shown by *Felton*, in his *Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 92. That both Puffendorff and Grotius were of this opinion may be seen in *Leland's Advantage of Revelation*, vol. ii. part 2. chap. 2. It may also be deduced from the admissions of *Lord Bollingbroke*, who thought, that without such Revelation, the first race of mankind would have involuntarily sunk into Polytheism. "The variety of the phenomena which struck their senses," he says, "would lead them to imagine a variety of causes." — See *Leland's Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. p. 49. "Can it be reasonably imagined," asks Dr. Van Mildert, "that Adam was left (even in his primeval condition, when his faculties were unclouded by sin and corruption,) to acquire the knowledge

of his Creator, from such proofs only as the light of nature could afford him? Or that he was suffered to remain in a state of uncertainty and conjecture, respecting the continuance of his being, his future destination, the purposes of his creation, the duties which he had to perform, the happiness provided for him, or the means of attaining it? On all these points, so essential to his comfort and well-being, must we not necessarily conclude that he derived instruction immediately from the fountain of wisdom?" — *Van Mildert's Sermons at Boyle's Lecture*, vol. ii. p. 55. See also *Grew's Cosmologia Sacra*, book iv. ch. 5. ; also Bishop *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ*, vol. ii. p. 232. ; also Bishop *Leng's* 5th and 6th, 10th, 11th, and 12th *Sermons*, which show, that the ancient philosophers believed the first religion was derived immediately from God; see also his eleventh Sermon, p. 331. ; also *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. p. 15. and p. 138., with *Pistorius's Notes*; see also Bishop *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. ch. 1. and 2. ; *Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things*; *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, part i. ; *Law's Theory of Religion*, part ii. ; *Leland's View of Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 36. The following are the sensible observations of *Shuckford*: — " If Adam, or any other person of extraordinary learning, had, by a chain of

reasoning, brought these truths into the world, some hints, or other arguments, would have remained, as well as the truths produced by it, or some succeeding author would, at one time or another, have reasoned as fortunately as his predecessor. But nothing of this sort happened. Instead of it, we find that the early ages had a great stock of truths, of which they were so far from having learning to invent, that they could not so much as give the true meaning of them." See also *Ritchie on Revelation*, vol. i. p. 144—156. ; *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, part i. ch. 2. " That God from the beginning gave mankind some rule or law for their conduct," is allowed by Tindal, *Christianity as old as the Creation*, p. 3—5. Lord Bolingbroke admits that Plato insinuates frequently the want of a Divine Revelation.—See his *Works*, vol. 5. p. 214—216. 4to.

No. 7.

Was not Man created innocent?

" That we came not originally in so imperfect a state out of the hands of our Creator, is highly probable from the deductions of reason : it is certain from Revelation. Upon the part of reason alone, if we should suppose man to be

weak, compared with any higher order of intellectual beings, yet we cannot suppose him wicked. God's goodness made him not, nor was obliged to make him, as an angel, either in the manner or the measure of his faculties; but the goodness of God was engaged to create him innocent, that is, perfect according to his nature, and the rank which he held in the order and scale of beings.—*Felton's Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 74. &c. See also *Clarke's Sermons*, vol. xi. Serm. 13. Also *Leland's Answer to Tindal*: “It is certain that, if we judge by all appearance, human nature is now in a very degraded state. The wisest men amongst the heathens have owned and complained of it, and have puzzled themselves to account for it. It seems most reasonable, and most for the honour of God, to suppose, that the nature of man was originally in a more sound and healthful condition.”—Ch. iii. p. 34—41. See also *Lucas on Happiness*, vol. i. ch. 2.; see also *Clarke's Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*,” p. 417. in which he shows that many of the ancients concluded against the world's having been created by God in its present state of manifold disorder. Also *Balguy's Letter to a Deist*, p. 319.; also *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 7.; also *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, sect. 6. p. 189.; *Butler's*

Analogy, part i. chap. 5. ; *Watts's Ruin and Recovery* ; Introduction to *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, ch. 14. ; *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 344. ; *Nichols's First Conference with a Theist*, part ii. vol. ii. p. 32. ; *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, vol. i. book 3. chap. 4. “The heathen philosophers were sensible that human nature was much declined from its primitive rectitude, and sunk into a weak, drooping, and sickly state, which they called πτερόπυγος*, the moulting of the wings of the soul. But they were so just and reasonable as not to charge this upon God, but upon some corruption and impurity, contracted by the soul in a former state, before its union with the body. For the descent of the soul into their gross earthly bodies, they looked upon partly as the punishment of faults committed in a former state, and partly as the opportunity of a new trial, in order to its purgation and recovery. And this was the best account they were able to give of this matter, without the light of Divine Revelation.” — *Tillotson's Sermon*, 28. vol. i. p. 255. ; *Seed's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 4. ; *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, vol. ii. book 3. p. 344.

* Upon the force of this word, see Spencer's Notes to Origen contra Celsum, lib. 4. p. 191.—Edit. Cantab. 1677.

No. 8.

Fall of Man possible from his Free-Agency.

It is absolutely necessary, that intelligent beings should have scope given for action. There is a plain congruity in making their happiness to arise from the proper use of their powers, and to be the result of their own endeavours. This is the only happiness that can suit the nature of an active and free creature. Had they no command over events—were their states so immutably fixed, as not to be liable to be affected by one another, the consequence would be, that they would have nothing to do, that their faculties would be given them in vain, that virtue would be totally excluded from creation, and an universal stagnation, or quietism, take place in it.” *Price’s Dissertations*, ch. 4. and ch. 9. See also *A. B. King’s Sermon on the Fall*; *Butler’s Analogy*, part. 1. ch. 4. Upon the various traditions of the Fall to be found in heathen writers, see *Gale’s Court of the Gentiles*, vol. i. lib. 3. ch. 5. “Free-agency, in its very essence, contains liability to abuse; yet if you deprive a man of his free-agency, you subvert his nature. You may have order from him, and regularity, as you may have from the

tides, or trade winds, but you put an end to his moral character, to virtue, to merit, to accountableness, to the use indeed of reason.” *Paley’s Natural Theology*, ch. 26. See also *Berkeley’s Alciphron*, dialogue 6. sect. 12.; also *Reid’s Essays*, vol. iii. Essay 4.; also *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 219.; Bishop *Watson’s Sermon on the Fall*, vol. i. Serm. 4. “Why, it may be asked, did not God make Adam incapable of sinning? This question may be answered by another, is it possible to make a free-agent incapable of sinning?” p. 425—430. See *King’s Origin of Evil*, ch. 5. sect. 2. and sub-sect. 7. “It is impossible to say how much the first fully overt act of irregularity might disorder the inward constitution, unsettle the adjustment, and alter the proportions which formed our nature, and in which the uprightness of its make consisted,” &c. See *Butler’s Analogy*, part 1. ch. 5.; *Van Mildert’s Sermons at Boyle’s Lectures*, vol. i. p. 32. The liability of free-agency to abuse of its faculties, is shown at large by Dr. *J. Clarke* in the second volume of his *Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*, p. 122., also p. 294.; *Conybeare’s Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 149—154. “A Deo tantum rationem habemus; bonam autem rationem aut non bonam, à nobis. Vide *Cic. de Nat. Deorum*, lib. 3. c. 29.

No. 9.

Fall of Man probable from the Contradictions which exist between Reason and Passion.

The following passages from ancient writers are sufficient to show, that mankind, in all ages, have virtually acknowledged the doctrine of the Fall. “*Nemo invenitur, qui se possit absol vere ; et innocentem quisque se dicit, respiciens testem, non conscientiam.*” *Seneca de Ira*, lib. 1. cap. 14. “*Animi labes nec diuturnitate evanescere, nec amnibus ullis elui potest.*” *Cic. de Leg.* lib. 2. c. 10. *Sic distrahuntur in contrarias partes impotentium cupiditates, cum huic obsecutus sis, illi est repugnandum.* *Cic. Tusc. Disputat.* lib. 5. sect. 20. *Intus etiam in animis inclusæ cupiditates inter se dissident atque discordant ; ex quo vitam amarissimam necesse est effici.* *Cic. de Fin.* lib. 1. sect. 13. ; also sect. 18. *Homo non ut a matre, sed ut a novercâ, natura editus est in vitam, corpore nudo et fragili et infirmo ; animo autem anxio ad molestias, humili ad timores, molli ad labores, prono ad libidines, in quo tamen inest tanquam obrutus quidam divinus ignis ingenii et mentis.*” *Cic. apud Augustin.* lib. 4. *contra Pelagium.* See many other passages of the same kind, cited by *Clarke* in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 124—128. See *Felton’s Vindication of*

the Christian Faith, in which he shows that the doctrine of the Fall has been taken for granted in all systems of natural religion, p. 109, &c. See *Leng's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*, p. 354. &c.; also *Seed's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 334.; also *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. p. 24. ch. 2. prop. 24. See also *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part I. ch. 16., in which numerous heathen authorities are cited, to show that mankind have always felt and acknowledged themselves to be in a sinful and guilty condition.

“The philosophers and wise men among the heathens were sensible of a great depravation in our souls, and degeneracy from the divine life, and therefore they prescribed several ways and methods for purifying our souls, and raising them to that purity and perfection to which they supposed they were designed.” *Tillotson*, vol. iii. p. 309. &c.; *Watts's Ruin and Recovery*, quest. 1, and 2. That the scriptural account of the origin of evil accords with the phenomena of the moral world, is shown by *Van Mildert*, in his *Boyle's Lectures*, vol. i. p. 3.; also by *Clarke*, in his *Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*, vol. ii. p. 180—197. Upon the notion of duty, and of moral obligations, which is inherent in our nature, see *Bishop Butler's admirable Sermons on Human Nature*; *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. i. ch. 11.; *Price's Review of Morals*, ch. 8, and 9. particularly p. 358—363.

No. 10.

Opposition between our Wishes and Situations.

“ Deprimimur in hoc statu mortali infra locum et gradum et præstantiam naturæ nostræ. Unde iste nobis pudor in nonnullis rebus aut affectibus naturalibus? Unde istæc modestia aut perturbatio in natura humana,” &c. Vide *Burnet. de Statu Mort.* ch. 2. The arguments which are made use of by *Burnet*, and other writers, to prove the immortality of the soul, will also tend to show, that we are not in the state wherein the equitable and all-wise Creator would have originally placed mankind. See also *A. B. Sharp's Sermons*, vol. vi. Serm. 15. *Tillotson's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 14. and 15.; also *Blair's fine Sermon on the Love of Praise*, as indicating the remains of a more elevated nature, Serm. 21, and 31.; also his discourse on the *Vanity of the World*, vol. ii. Serm. 24.; *Simpson's Internal Evidences*, part. 2. ch. 2. sect. 3., and ch. 3. sect. 3. “ Man is at a loss where to fix himself, and how to recover his rank in the world. He is unquestionably out of his way. He feels within himself the small remains of his once happy state which he is now unable to retrieve. And yet this is what he daily courts and follows after, always with solicitude, never with success, encompassed with darkness which he can neither escape nor pene-

trate. Hence arose the great contest among the philosophers, some of whom endeavoured to raise and exalt man by displaying his greatness, others to depress and debase him by representing his misery. But what seems more strange is this, that each party borrowed from the other the ground of their opinions. For the misery of man may be inferred from his greatness, and his greatness is deducible from his misery. Thus the one sect, with more evidence, demonstrated his misery, because they derived it from his greatness, while the other more strongly concluded his greatness because they founded it in his misery. Whatever was offered to justify his greatness in behalf of one party, served only to evince his misery in behalf of the other. In a word, man knows himself to be miserable ; he is therefore exceedingly miserable: but he likewise appears to be eminently great, from the very act of knowing himself to be wretched.” *Pascal.* See *Price’s Review of Morals*, ch. 2. *Baxter’s Reasons of the Christian Religion*, part i. ch. 16.

No. 11.

Fall probable from the Ills we suffer.

“ If we take a survey of sublunary nature, as of that system at the head of which we are

placed, we shall find that it has undergone a great change on account of human apostacy, that it lies under the frown of Heaven, that its order and course is disturbed, and that, in fine, it has become a stage in which the Almighty no less displays his justice and his judgments, than his grace and beneficence ; on which his indignation against sin, is no less conspicuous than his compassionate regard to sinners," &c. See *Bates's Rural Philosophy*, part. 1. sect. 1. where this subject is very finely treated. See also *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, vol. i. p. 23., &c. who adduces some remarkable passages from the ancients concerning that *punitive justice* which may be traced in creation. See also *Watts's Ruin and Recovery*, appendix, essay 1., where this subject is handled with great force of reasoning. See *Doddridge's Lectures*, part. 8. prop. 133.

" The Scripture account of the fatal and important consequences of the first transgression, shows how superficial are the usual apologies made by wretched mortals in excuse of their vices and follies. One crime is the effect of thoughtlessness ; they did not, forsooth, consider how bad such an action was. Another is a natural action. Drunkenness is only an immoderate indulgence of a natural appetite. Have such excuses as these been thought sufficient

in the case before us ? The eating of the forbidden fruit, was only indulging a natural appetite directly contrary to the Divine command; and it is likely that our first parents did not duly attend to all the probable consequences of their transgression. But neither of these apologies, nor the inexperience of the offenders, nor their being overcome by temptation, were sufficient to avert the Divine displeasure, the marks of which we and our world bear to this hour.” *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 345. “ Death has in it all the appearance of being an evil for which such creatures as we are might not be originally intended.” *Price’s Dissertations*, p. 155. *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. ii. ch. 13.

No. 12.

Hereditary Principle.

“ According to the laws of nature we see that children are every day suffering the most grievous calamities, on account of the crimes of their parents and progenitors. It is God’s will that they should do so ; he has made the world so that they must,” &c. See *Ogden’s Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 31, 32. ; also some fine observations on this subject in Bishop *Watson’s Tracts*, vol. i. Sermon 4. See many fine illustrations of

this chapter in *Watts's Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*, particularly p. 106 — 154., also p. 477.; also *Butler's Analogy*, part viii. ch. 5.; also *Ogden's Sermon on the Redemption of Man*. “ It is very strange, and you are pretty sure it is hardly right, that their posterity should be involved in their guilt, and made to suffer for an offence that was not their own. Now, first of all, is it not surprising that this should appear strange to us, who have lived all our lives in a world in which the same thing has happened every day ? ” &c. See the sentiments of some ancient philosophers cited on this subject by Dr. *Knox*, in his *Evening Lucubrat.* vol. ii. p. 167.; also *Warburton's Divine Legation*, vol. iii. p. 457. See *Price's Dissertations*. “ We see,” says this excellent writer, “ among the individuals of mankind, that in consequence of their dependence one on the other, they are often deprived of benefits which seemed to be intended for them by the constitution of the Deity, and brought into states which, though they give no reason for complaining of Providence, are yet justly deemed calamitous. How credible is it that there may be also events, or connections in nature, by which, consistently with perfect wisdom and goodness, the like may happen sometimes to a species,” p. 156. There are some fine observations on this subject in *Hartley on*

Man, vol. ii. ch. 2. prop. 40.; also in *Delaney's "Revelat. examined with Candour,"* Dissertations 1. and 7. See *Doddridge's Lectures*, Lect. 164—168.; also *Balguy's Second Letter to a Deist*, p. 287—290.; also *Grotius de Jure*, lib. ii. cap. 21.; *De Pœnarum Communicat.* Εἰς τεταρτην γενεαν διαβιβάζει την τιμωρίαν. *Plat. apud Grot. de Decal.*

No. 13.

Other Beings in the Universe.

Upon the opinions of the ancients respecting the origin of evil, as connected with the revolt of evil spirits, see *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, ch. 14.

“ In the innumerable gradations of sensitive beings with which Almighty God has replenished this earth, and hath, as we judge from analogy, replenished all other planets in this solar system, and all other solar systems sunk in the inconceivable profundity of infinite space, we may conclude that the human species is neither the highest nor the lowest in the rank of intellectual and moral agents. This conclusion reason renders probable as to both points, and revelation renders certain as to one of them.” Bishop *Watson's Tracts*, vol. i. p. 541. That the Scripture doctrine of evil spirits is agreeable

to reason, see *Leland's Deistical Writers*, vol. i. letter 35. p. 159. ; also *Law's Notes to King's Origin of Evil*, Nos. 19. 22. 24, &c. and No. 71. ; and see also *Chalmers's "Discourses on the Christian Revelation, in Connection with Modern Astronomy;"* also *Price's "Dissertation on Providence,"* p. 159. ; also *Wollaston's "Relig. of Nature,"* p. 195. sect. 5. ; also *Fuller's "Gospel its own Witness,"* part ii. ch. 5. ; also *Locke*, l. ii. c. 23. sect. 13., and lib. iv. c. 3. sect. 24. See the being, nature, and offices of evil spirits considered, in the 6th discourse of *Dr. Seed*, vol. iii. “The doctrine of an evil dæmon, who, though very powerful, was inferior to the good Deity, and should be abolished by him, is among the agreements mentioned by Jortin to have subsisted between Pagan and Christian philosophy.” See *Jortin on Christ. Relig.* p. 119. See also *Watson's Popular Evidences*, ch. 4. ; also *Bishop Horsley's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. xi. p. 236. The probability of the existence of such beings is shown by *Addison*, *Spectator*, No. 519. ; also by *Doddridge*, in his 98th Lecture. That the notions of the Heathens very nearly approached to those of the Jews and Christians on this subject, is shown by him in Lect. 212. For various traditions of the Heathens relating to diabolic agency, see *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacrae.* book iii. ch. 3. sect. 17. and 18. See *Conybeare's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 9. and 10.

No. 14.

Might not they have tempted Man ?

Upon the subject of this chapter, the reader may consult with advantage Bishop *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacrae*, book iii. ch. 3., who shows, both from reason and tradition, the probable truth of the scriptural account of the origin of evil. See also Bishop *King's Origin of Evil*, ch. 5. sect. 5. sub. 4. Concerning the traditions of the ancients on this subject, see *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, ch. 14.; also *Nichol's First Conference with a Theist*, vol. i. p. 187. See *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lect.* vol. i. p. 447. See *Clarke's Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*, vol. ii. p. 220, &c.; *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, part i. book 3. ch. 4. “The welfare of a species, like that of individuals amongst men, may be made dependent on a higher species; and while orders of reasonable beings may be so circumstanced, as to be liable to be brought into very calamitous states, from which it may not be possible for them to be saved, according to the general laws of the world, except by the kind assistance and labours of beings superior to them; and we see reason to believe that such a general economy of nature, though the result, in some instances, may form abortion and ruin, was necessary to produce the greatest virtue

and the greatest good, upon the whole.” *Price’s Dissertation on Providence*, p. 130. ; *Shuckford’s History of the Creation and Fall of Man*, ch. 10. ; *Doddridge’s Lectures*, 213—215.

No. 15.

Solitary Innocence required some Probation.

See Archbishop *King’s Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*, particularly sect. 8. ; and Bishop *Law’s Notes*, No. 62. See *Leland’s Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, part i. ch. 1. ; also his *Answer to Tindal*, vol. ii. ch. 15. ; also *Shuckford’s Dissertation on the Creation and Fall of Man* ; Archbishop *King’s Sermon on the Fall, and Law’s Theory of Religion*. “ There is plainly no absurdity in the scriptural account of the fall of a certain number of beings, of a rank prior in existence, and superior in dignity to ours ; nor of their being driven, by a total despair of recovery to the Divine favour, to a confirmed habit of perseverance in vice, and opposition to all that is good. That such desperate beings, who knew themselves to be sealed to destruction, should, as far as permitted, exercise an implacable envy and hatred against our species, of whom they foresee that some part should rise to that happiness from which they are fallen, is not to be wondered at.” *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 369. Upon the

fables and traditions of the ancients, see *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, book ii. ; *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, c. 14. ; *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, book i. ch. 4. ; also *Sumner's Records of the Creation*, vol. ii. chap. 2.

No. 16.

Man a mixed and imperfect Being.

Does not the world exhibit traces of order and confusion ? See *Doddridge's Lectures*, prop. 89. ; *Watt's Ruin and Recovery*, Essay 1. p. 359. "In the whole form and course of the world since the original defection, we may discern a display of justice softened by forbearance, and of indulgence tempered with justice ; a righteous judge as well as a gracious benefactor ; a God offended, but not irreconcilable. For what account can be given upon the hypothesis of our native innocence and of our relation to God as a benign Creator only, of the treatment we receive in the course of his Providence ? Should it be suggested, that it is for our trial, for the exercise and improvement of our virtue, and in consequence, the advancement of our happiness ; yet is it not a strange trial for an *innocent* creature * to be introduced into being with weeping and anguish, to sicken

* See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. c. 1.

a few years, and before he has committed any personal offence, to be snatched away by the hand of death? Or if his term be lengthened, to see him exposed to numberless evils, both moral and physical, to injuries and disasters; to the buffets of nature, and of what the world calls fortune, and then to close his days in languishing disease, and sometimes in excruciating torments?" &c. *Bates's Rural Philosophy*, part 1. sect. 1.

No. 17.

Of Hope and Repentance.

"It is reasonable," says Jortin, "that the Divine Mercy should constantly display itself in all cases which lie within the reach of compassion. Such was the case of us men, who though sinful, yet are weak and frail beings; though offenders, yet corrigible and capable of amendment," &c. See his *Discourses on the Christ. Religion*, p. 43, &c., also ch. 7. "Repentance is a duty of natural religion, and reason gives hopes that it may be advantageous to us; but the utmost which a man can conclude, without the assistance of revelation, is, that it shall be much better for him in a future state, if he amend his life, than if he continues wicked. Thus far reason goes, and no farther, p. 261. "Quem poenitet peccasse pene est innocens." *Senec.*

That *hope* was the extreme point at which human reason could arrive, after the joint use of repentance and sacrifice, is shown by Bishop *Conybeare* in his *Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 115—133. Upon the hopes entertained by the Jews and Heathens, of some extraordinary deliverer to rescue and reform mankind, see *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, ch. 25. See also *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. 6. p. 142—167. See the authorities referred to by *Magee*, vol. i. p. 95.; also *Watts's Ruin and Recovery*, quest. 10.; also *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. c. 5. sect. 4. “The fact is, that there are remedies provided for the misfortunes and calamities of men; and that greater goodness is in this instance displayed in the constitution of nature than we could, on any sure grounds, have antecedently expected.” See *Price's Dissertation on Providence*, p. 129.; also *Foster's Discourses on Natural Religion*, vol. i. c. 8.; also *Paley's Natural Theology*, ch. 26.

That the effects of repentance in a state of nature would afford some hopes of pardon, mingled with great apprehensions, is shown by *Doddridge in his Lectures*, vol. i. p. 3. prop. 81.; also prop. 93. On the natural hopes of forgiveness of sin, see *Barrow*, vol. ii. p. 373. See some beautiful reflections on man's natural hopes

of pardon in *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part i. ch. 17. Yet that repentance alone did not seem likely to secure pardon, is shown by *Turner* in his *Boyle's Lectures*, and by *Berriman* in his First Sermon at the same. “ Will repentance alone recover that happiness which mankind had forfeited, and rescue them from that misery to which they are become obnoxious? Do we not find in the ordinary course of nature, which is God’s appointment, that punishments which no after-conduct, no subsequent reformation can entirely remove, often attend upon guilt? A man, for instance, shall feel the ill effects of debauchery, and a profligate course of life, long after he has repented and been reclaimed. Now, if we thus suffer for our sins, notwithstanding our repentance, in the daily course of God’s natural providence, what ground have we to imagine that repentance alone will free us from all the evil consequences of sin hereafter?” See *Seed's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 5. p. 374. See also Bishop *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 112—131. Upon the worship and sacrifices of the ancients, see *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, book ii. c. 9. part i. How imperfectly the scheme of Deism accounts for the treatment of penitent sinners, is shown by Dr. *Ritchie on Revelation*, vol. ii. p. 253. See *Leland against Tindal*, vol. i. ch. 6.

No. 18.

Reason for hoping a Revelation.

The subject of this chapter is very ably treated by *Watts*, in his *Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*, question 10.—“What hope of recovery can reason give us?” See also *Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 156.; *Baxter’s Reasons for Christianity*, part i. ch. 16. and 17. The general grounds for expecting a Divine Revelation are stated by Dr. *Barrow*, vol. ii. serm. 13.

For the opinions of the ancient philosophers, respecting their want and hope of a Revelation, see Dr. *Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. vii. p. 153—167.; also Bishop *Leng’s Eleventh Sermon at Boyle’s Lectures*; also *Gale’s Court of the Gentiles*, part i.

“Had the natural course of things in the present state been such, that whenever any particular calamities or accidents happened to men, there should have been no remedy for them, we should have had no just reason for complaint, and God would have been good. Nor could any arguments have been taken from this attribute to prove, that there ought to have been remedies provided, which would not equally have proved that they ought to be easy, universal, and infallible, or rather, that there should

have been no occasion for them, and no sufferings or pains of any kind. But the fact is, that there are remedies provided for the misfortunes and calamities of men, and they are not left, as they might have been, to perish irretrievably by the calamities that happen to them, but it is put in their power, in numberless cases, to help one another, and to prevent the fatal effects which would follow particular calamities. A provision is made, in the spontaneous agency and benevolence of our fellow-creatures, for a great addition to the happiness of life, and diminution of its sufferings." *Price's Dissertation on Providence*, p. 128. *Watt's Ruin and Recovery*, question 10. ; *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. ch. 5. ; see also *Wollaston's Religion of Nature*, ch. 5. sect. 19. ; *Ritchie's Peculiar Doctrines of Revelation*, vol. i. sect. 3. ch. 2.

"It must be admitted," says *Bolingbroke*, "that Plato insinuates, in many places, the want or the necessity of a Divine Revelation, to discover what the external service of God requires, and the expiation for sin, and to give stronger assurances of the rewards and punishments that await men in another world." See *Leland's Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 27.

No. 19.

Probable Channel of Revelation — Repentance, Pardon, and Sacrifice.

This subject is enquired into by *Doddridge*, in his 95th and 97th Propositions.— See his Lectures, part 5.: “Repentance is a duty of natural religion ; and reason gives us hopes that it may be advantageous to us. We find ourselves able to change, as from better to worse, so from worse to better. Now, certainly, it is not to no purpose that we enjoy this power. It seems, therefore, probable, that God, who made us capable of amendment, will show some favour to us, if, for the time to come, we carefully endeavour to deserve it,” &c. See *Jortin on the Christ. Religion*, chap. 7. Yet that this hope was not independent of the conviction of the necessity of sacrifice and atonement for sin, is shown at large by *Magee*, vol. i. *Notes*, No. 4. and 5.

The following facts relative to the present state of Mahometanism in India, will powerfully illustrate our sentiments respecting the necessity of a sacrificial form of worship : “It is well known that Mahomet endeavoured to set up a system of Deism, confessedly drawn from a very imperfect knowledge of the Old and New Testament, in which he grafted various observances, well suited to gratify the two

leading passions in our fallen nature, — self-dependence and the love of sin. His followers have not been able to repose in that system, but have exalted the grandsons of Mahomet, whose death they annually commemorate, into martyrs for their sect, and rely on their death for the forgiveness of sins. The great body of the Mahometans in India annually celebrate the *Mohurrim*, or festival of the death of Hussen and Hussein. These were the sons of Fatima, the daughter of Mahomet, by Ali; and on the death of their father, were opposed by a competitor for the supremacy, who, it is said, procured one of them to be poisoned by means of one of his concubines. The other was slain in battle. An opinion has become current amongst the Mahometans, that, in the day of judgment, Fatima will appear before the throne, with the heart of the poisoned son in one hand, and with the head of the murdered son in the other, and will demand acquittal on account of their death for their followers; which they suppose will be granted." — Note to a Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Corrie, now a Chaplain in the East India Company's service, p. 57. In quâlibet ætate, et apud quaslibet hominum nationes, semper fuit aliqua sacrificiorum oblatio. Quod autem est apud omnes, naturale est. *Paulus Burgensis* apud *Stillingfleet*. *Irenicum*, book i. c. 3. p. 76.

No. 20.

Unity of God.

“ It is granted, that reason can prove the unity of the First Cause, by arguments drawn from the contemplation of his works, and by reflection on our own minds. Yet it must be granted, that when Christianity appeared, the one true God was acknowledged and worshipped by no one nation in the world, the Jews excepted.” — *Grove’s Moral Philosophy*, vol. ii. chap. 20. p. 591. “ The belief of there being but one God is now very familiar and common ; but before the preaching of the Gospel, polytheism was so ancient and universal, that to all the world, the Jews only excepted, monotheism was a mystery.” — *Grew’s Cosmologia Sacra*, book 5. ch. 4. See the article *Theology*, part 2. sect. 1. in *Encyclopædia Britannica* ; also *Stillingfleet’s Origines Sacræ*, book 3. chap. 6. sect. 4. There are some remarkable testimonies of the ancients to the Divine Unity in *Barrow’s Eighth Sermon*, vol. ii. See *Doddridge’s Forty-fourth Lecture* ; *Paley’s Natural Theology*, ch. 24. and 25. ; *Ogden’s Sermon on the Unity of God*, vol. ii. serm. 1. ; Bishop *Wilkin’s Natural Religion*, lib. i. ch. 4. ; *Foster’s Discourses on Natural Religion*, vol. i. ; *Wollaston’s Religion of Nature*, sect. 5. ; *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, book 3. sect. 1. For proofs of the

Divine Unity as discoverable by reason, see *Clarke's Being and Attributes*, p. 44. ; *Leland's Short Method with the Deists*, p. 60. ; *Macclaine against Jenyn's Letter III.* ; Bishop *Law's Notes on King's Origin of Evil*, no. 10. The very imperfect notions of the ancient philosophers concerning the Unity of the Divine Being, are shown by *Leland* in his *Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, part i. chap. 13. and 14. ; *Gray's Connection*, chap. 10. The influence of idolatry on the conduct of the heathen is shown by *Weston on Miracles*, chap. 9. The tendency of modern infidel speculations to confound the God of Nature with the system of the world, is shown by *Van Mildert* in his *Boyle's Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 317. The same shown of the ancient philosophers, p. 92. ; also by *Tillotson*, vol. i. serm. 48. ; *Barrow's Works*, vol. ii. serm. 16. The opinions of the ancients concerning the Divine Unity, are set forth at large by *Cudworth*, in book i. ch. 4. of his *Intellectual System*. See also *Whitby's Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, ch. 3. and ch. 6., in which the imperfect notions of the heathens on this subject are clearly displayed ; also *Sumner's Records of the Creation*, part i. ch. 3. sect. 5., where the superiority of Christianity is distinctly shown, by the comparison of Pagan with Christian testimonies.

No. 21.

New Relations of the Divine Being.

“ If a Revelation from God be necessary to teach us any thing concerning the Divine Nature and his designs towards mankind, and in relation to a future state, more than what we could naturally know before, it must of necessity be something which our reason could not discover ; and as far as the nature of an Infinite Being is concerned in it, it must exceed our finite capacities, by the very nature of things. Yet the belief of it, when so revealed, may be very reasonable, so long as it implies no contradictions. And, indeed, it would be a much greater prejudice against a Revelation, if it had no marks in it of any thing but what human reason could have discovered without it.” — *Leng’s Sixteenth Sermon*, p. 503.

“ That God can make known to us many truths, of which we were before ignorant, though greatly interested in them, will not, surely, be doubted ; for we can make known such very often one to another. And that from these truths corresponding rules of behaviour may flow, is equally plain. Those duties and relations, therefore, to our Redeemer and Sanctifier, which the Holy Scriptures alone discover

to us, are not on that account at all less real than those to our Creator of which reason informs us." — *Secker's Second Sermon on Matthew*, chap. 28. v. 19. and 20. " As it is very probable that much of a Revelation would relate to the Divine Being and his operations, it is to be expected, that though much additional light may be given us as to many things concerning him, yet that these discoveries may be connected with some further hints relating to what is yet unknown ; so that there may be many things in it beyond our adequate comprehensions, or, in other words, something mysterious." — *Part 5. Preposit. 95. Doddridge's Lectures.*

" Many of the doctrines of our religion are transcendantly sublime, and some of them above the highest reach of our understandings to compass ; but to determine the great goodness and mercy which they accord to the human race, the only relations to be considered are those between God and man. This is a species of evidence which is mixed and interwoven with the vitals of our religion, and inherent in its very substance." — *Tatham's Chart and Scale*, vol. ii. p. 61. See also *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 31.

No. 22.

God known to Man after a Relative Manner.

“ Nothing is more evident, than that we have no idea of God as he is in himself; and it is for want of such an idea, that we frame to ourselves the most excellent conception of him we can, by putting together, in one, the greatest perfections we observe in the creation, and particularly in our own reasonable nature, to stand for his perfections; not most grossly arguing and inferring that God is such an one as ourselves, only infinitely enlarged and improved in all our natural powers and faculties, but concluding that our greatest excellencies are the best, and aptest, and most correspondent representations only of his incomprehensible perfections, which infinitely transcend the most exalted of what are in any created beings, and are far out of the reach of all human imagination.”

Brown's Procedure of the Understanding, ch. 3. p. 85.; *Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things*, p. 94. See also Bishop *Brown's Divine Analogy*, where the subject of this chapter is treated with great learning and ability. That this principle holds good also in any revelation communicated by others, is shown by *Locke on Human Understanding*, book iv. ch. 18. sect. 3. “ No man

inspired by God, can, by any revelation, communicate to others any new simple ideas which they had not before from sensation or reflection; for whatsoever impressions he may himself have from the immediate hand of God, this revelation, if it be of new simple ideas, cannot be conveyed to another, either by words or language," &c. p. 264. Query. If these observations were practically attended to, would they not act as an excellent preservative against mystics and enthusiasts?

See *Barrow's Sermons on the Creed*, vol. ii. serm. 10., in which he explains the term "Father," as applied to God. See also *Price's Review of the Questions of Morals*, ch. 1. and 5.; also *Cudworth's Eternal and Immutable Morality*, book iv. ch. 4. See *Pearson on the Creed*, artic. 1. p. 45. "Wheresoever God hath been acknowledged, he hath been understood and worshipped as a Father; — the very heathen poets so describe their Gods, and their vulgar names do carry *Father* in them, as the most popular and universal notion." Of God's relation to us as our Father, see *Baxter's Reasons of the Christian Religion*, part i. ch. 12.

No. 23.

The Author of a Revelation would perhaps be Divine.

“ That the gods might appear and converse with men, and that the Divinity might inhabit human nature, were points allowed by the heathens, and for this I appeal to their poets and philosophers, whose testimonies are so numerous and clear, that it would be an affront to repeat them to a man of any education.” *Berkeley’s Minute Philosopher*, dial. vi. sect. 12. “ It is possible that some superior spirit may be employed as the messenger of such a revelation ; and if he should not only make a transient appearance on earth, but take up his abode here for a considerable time in a human form, giving an example of the most perfect virtue, we must acknowledge the circumstance extremely well chosen and worthy of the Divine wisdom, though we cannot pretend it to be absolutely necessary.” *Doddridge*, prop. 97. “ It is congruous to reason,” says *Baxter*, “ that fallen creatures, who knew so little of God, of his will, and of their own concerns, and of the other world, should have a teacher sent from Heaven of greater authority and credit than an angel to acquaint us with God and his will, and the world

to which we are going.” *Reasons for Christianity*, part. ii. ch. 5. p. 252.

“ The heathens had even some notions that their gods, upon very solemn occasions, might come down to them in the likeness of man, as we may gather from the men of Lystra, who attempted to do sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas.” See *Stanhope’s Boyle’s Lectures*. Seneca thus speaks of the mind of his imaginary wise man : Quid aliud voces hunc, quàm Deum in humano corpore hospitantem ? *Epist. 31*.

No. 24.

The Force of Example.

See *Doddridge*, as quoted in the preceding note. “ It is probable that the chief persons employed in opening such a revelation may appear in plain and low circumstances of human life, rather than with princely grandeur ; since, in this view, their testimony might be less suspected of being a political contrivance, and their example would be more instructive to the generality of mankind,” lect. 109. “ It was meet that the world should have not only a teacher, but also a perfect pattern before them of all virtues ; and therefore the Gospel is written historically, with doctrines intermixt, that we might have both perfect precepts, and a perfect patron.” *Baxter’s Reasons for Christianity*,

p. 254. The force and excellence of Christ's example are set forth by *Barrow*, vol. iii. serm. 2. and 3. Longum iter est per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla. *Senec.* epist. 6. Aliquis vir bonus nobis eligendus est, ac semper ante oculos habendus. *Idem, Epist.* 11.

No. 25.

Sacrifice.

“ If the idea of the innocent suffering in the room of the guilty, were in all cases inadmissible, and utterly repugnant to the human understanding, how came the use of expiatory sacrifices to prevail as it has in every age and nation? Whether the idea first proceeded from a divine command, as Christians generally believe, or whatever was its origin, it has approved itself to the minds of men, and not of the most uncultivated part of mankind only, but of the most learned and polite.” *Fuller’s Gospel its own Witness*, part ii. ch. 4.; also *Maclaine against Jenyns*, letter 4.; also Bishop *Watson’s Miscellaneous Tracts*, serm. 4.; Bishop *Warburton’s Divine Legation*, book ix. ch. 2.; *Leland’s View of the Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 32. p. 227, &c.; *Conybeare’s Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 115. *Grotius de Jure Belli*, ch. 21. lib. 2.

For general information upon the doctrine of sacrifice, I would beg leave to refer to the

learned work of Dr. *Magee on Atonement*, though I am obliged to differ from this excellent author, when he would attempt to prove (see vol. ii. No. 54.) the “*natural unreasonableness of sacrifice.*” This is surely venturing beyond what prudence would dictate. It is sufficient to show the Divine institution of this rite, without endeavouring to evince (what it is impossible to believe) that any appointment of God is made in direct opposition to reason. How much more safe to believe, that it was instituted on account of its suitableness and congeniality to the human mind! Besides, on any other supposition, how can you explain its *universality* amongst all nations, whether barbarous or civilized? If the learned author would condescend to compare the *reasoning* of his 54th note with the *facts* which are contained in No. 55. and 56., I am not without hope that he would see the propriety of attending to this suggestion.

“ It cannot be thought unreasonable, says Dr. *Clarke*, to be believed, that in such a revelation, wherein God surely proclaims remission of sin, and the acceptableness of repentance, he should have appointed such a sacrifice or expiation for sin, as ought, at the same time, to be a sufficient testimony of his irreconcilable hatred against it. For though, by the light of nature, it was exceedingly probable, and to be hoped for, that

God would forgive sins upon true repentance, yet it could not be proved that he was absolutely obliged to do so, or that he would certainly do so. On the contrary there was reason to suppose, that in vindication of the honour and dignity of his laws, he would require some further satisfaction and expiation. And, accordingly, we find the custom of sacrificing to have prevailed universally over the heathen world in all ages, which however unreasonable an expectation it was to think that the blood of beasts could truly expiate sin, yet thus much it plainly shows, that it has been the common apprehension of mankind in all ages—that God would not be appeased nor pardon sin without some punishment and satisfaction; and yet, at the same time, they had good hopes, that, upon the repentance of sinners, God would accept some other satisfaction instead of the destruction of the offender. It is therefore plainly agreeable to right reason to believe, that God, in vindication of the honour of his laws, and for a testimony of his hatred against sin, should appoint some sacrifice and expiation for sin, at the same time that he forgives the sinner on his true repentance.” *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 195. “Though the efficacy of repentance itself alone,” says Butler, “to prevent what mankind had rendered themselves ob-

noxious to, and recover what they had forfeited, is now insisted on in opposition to Christianity ; yet by the general prevalence of propitiatory sacrifices over the heathen world, this notion of repentance alone being sufficient to expiate guilt appears contrary to the general sense of mankind." *Analogy*, part 2. ch. 5. p. 251. " It seems," says Bishop *Leng*, " to have been a general notion of mankind, that God would admit of some expiation for sin, which occasioned so universal a practice of sacrificing ; but that any sacrifice which man could offer should be a valuable consideration for this purpose cannot easily be conceived," serm. 16. p. 491. See also *Felton's Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 254. *Brown against Tindal*, p. 467, &c. ; also *Stillingfleet's Irenicum*, lib. i. ch. 3. p. 76., and *Grot. de Satisfact.* cap. 10.

No. 26.

Spiritual Aid.

That the ancients had some hopes of being spiritually assisted in their prayers and religious ceremonies, and in the general course of their lives, if conducted on the principles of virtue, is plain from numerous passages in their writings. It might be deduced, indeed, from their opinions of prophecy. Thus *Cicero* : *Vetus opinio est, jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque*

et populi Romani et omnium gentium firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines Divinationem, quam Græci $\mu\alpha\pi\lambda\kappa\eta\nu$ appellant, id est præsensionem et scientiam rerum futurarum. *De Divin.* lib. i. ch. 1. Nemo unquam vir magnus, sine Divino afflatu fuit. *De Nat. Deorum*, lib. ii. Many passages of the same kind may be found cited by *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 153, &c. See others collected by *Bates*, in his excellent work entitled “*Rural Philosophy*,” part ii. p. 158—160. ; by *Ellis*, in his *Knowledge of Divine Things*, p. 217. and 238. and 282. A remarkable passage on this subject is cited by *Dr. Knox*, from the works of Aristotle ; see his *Lucubrations*, vol. ii. No. 43. ; and a similar passage is cited by *Cudworth* in his *Intellectual System*, vol. i. p. 204. Prope est a te Deus, tecum est, intus est ; ita dico, Lucili, sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorumque bonorumque nostrorum observator et custos : hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat. *Seneca*. See also *Wollaston’s Religion of Nature*, sect. 5. prop. 4. p. 191.

No. 27.

Immortality of the Soul.

The great uncertainty of the ancients respecting this important doctrine of natural religion is

shown by *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 143—147. ; also prop. xi. p. 178. ; also *Leland's Advantage of Revelation*, part iii. c. 1. See the article *Metaphysics*, in *Encyc. Brit.* ch. 14. for an account of the arguments of the philosophers for the immortality of the soul ; yet all who admitted this doctrine appear to have believed in its pre-existence, p. 664. The natural arguments for this doctrine are to be found in *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ*, book iii. ch. 1. ; *Doddridge's Lectures*, part iv. vol. 1. lect. 91. The natural and moral evidences for the immortality of the soul are stated in *Bal guy's* 19th and 20th sermons. There are three fine Discourses by Bishop *Porteus* on this subject, in his sermons, vol. i. The arguments are also briefly summed up in *Stewart's Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, p. 227. ; also *Butler's Analogy*, part i. ch. 1. ; *Wollaston's Religion of Nature*, 349—385. ; *Paley's Natural Theology*, p. 543. ; *Jortin on the Christian Religion*, 287—293. ; *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 194. and 372. See a very candid view of the opinions of the ancients respecting the immortality of the soul, in *Leland's Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 27. ; also in *Gray's Connection*, ch. 13. “ It is congruous to the wisdom and governing justice of God, that the same body which was partaker with the soul in

sin and duty should be partaker with it in suffering or felicity." *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, v. 396.; *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 70. "The most important service that can be rendered to human life, and that consequently which, one might expect beforehand, would be the great end and office of a revelation from God, is to convey to the world authorised assurances of the reality of a future existence." *Paley's Evidences*, vol. ii. part. 2. ch. 2. See also *Whitby's Necessity of Revelation*, ch. 5.

No. 28.

Eternal Rewards and Punishments.

That none of the ancient philosophers, except Socrates, believed in a proper state of rewards and punishments hereafter, is shown from their sentiments respecting the soul's being an emanation of the Divine substance, see *Encyc. Brit. article Metaphysics*, 267, 268, 269. The agreement between the doctrines of natural and revealed religion, as to rewards and punishments, is shown by Bishop *Sherlock*, vol. iv. p. 116.; also by *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. prop. 86—89.; and by *Tillotson*, vol. iii. Serm. 120. On the popular belief amongst the ancients of a future state of rewards and punishments, and of a judgment, see *Gray's Connection of Sacred and*

Profane Literature, ch. 27. See *Jortin's Sermons*, vol. iv. Serm. 4.; *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 32. and 33.; *Pearson on the Creed*, article 7. p. 444. There are some fine remarks by Bishop *Horsley*, vol. i. Serm. 4. p. 73—80. on the subject of eternal punishments, and their consistency with the Divine attributes; also in *Pearson on the Creed*, article 12.; also Bishop *Taylor's Discourses*, vol. i. Serm. 1—3.; also Dr. *Tottie's 15th Sermon*, who has illustrated this subject with various analogies. See also *Blair's 53d Sermon*, vol. ii., on the last Judgment; Bishop *Fowler's Design of Christianity*, sect. 3. ch. 14.; *Brown's Limits of the Understanding*, p. 351.; *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part i. ch. 14. and 15.; also *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 207. See *Tatham's Chart and Scale*, vol. i. c. xi. sect. 2.; *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 95. *Leland against Tindal*, ch. 8. part 1.

No. 29.

Some Doctrines mysterious.

“ It must not be objected,” says Abp. *Secker*, “ that believers in the Gospel are often full of doubts and terrors, for believers in natural religion alone have infinitely more cause for them;

as both their rule and their hopes are infinitely more obscure. *Serm. on Matthew*, ch. 10. v. 34.; also on *Deut.* ch. 29. v. 29. “That we should understand nothing further of God’s secrets than is unfolded to us, nor be capable of answering many questions which may be asked about them, otherwise than by confessing our ignorance, is so far from being a plea against their being really His, that it is a necessary consequence of it—so far from being strange in supernatural things, that it is common in natural ones.”

“Suppose there had been no mysterious parts in Revelation, and that every thing had been laid clear and open to the comprehension of natural reason, what would the improved understanding of a wise man have thought of it? Would he not have said that the whole was of mere human contrivance; since, if it were indeed divine, it must needs have spoken its original by some marks of Divinity, i. e. by some signatures of incomprehensible wisdom impressed upon it?” &c. *Hurd’s 5th Sermon*, vol. ii. *Lord Bacon* was of the same opinion, *De Augment.* sect. 28. See also *Watson’s Popular Evidences*, ch. 1.; *Butler’s Analogy*, part i. Introduction; also his Sermons on the *Ignorance of Man*; *Simpson’s Internal Evidences*, part i. ch. 4.; *Stillingfleet’s Orig. Sac.* book ii.

ch. 5. sect. 5. See Bishop *Watson against Paine*, p. 105—107. ; also *Leng's Sermons*, p. 503. ; *Magee on Atonement*, vol. i. No. 19. See the *Appendix* to the first vol. of *Leland against Tindal*, in which the mysteries of Natural are compared with those of Revealed Theology.

No. 30.

Positive Institutions.

“ The argument against positive institutions in religion tends equally to prove that all symbols in political or civil matters are absurd ; and so arraigns the wisdom and the customs of all nations. Why should a seal be added to confirm a writing ? ” See *Leland against Tindal*, vol. i. ch. 4. p. 58—70. The same author vindicates the ritual precepts of the Old Testament, in his reply to *Morgan's Moral Philosopher*, ch. 2. See *Watson's Popular Evidences*, part iv. ch. 2. sect. 3. ; *Felton's Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 397. ; *Wollaston's Religion of Nature*, sect. 5. p. 222. ; *Doddridge's Lectures*, prop. 96. See Bishop *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, ch. 4., in which he maintains, 1st, that it might, on several accounts, be expected, if God should ever vouchsafe a revelation, it would contain some matters of a positive nature ; 2^{dly}, that every revelation, whether real or pre-

tended, which hath ever been offered, has actually and in fact contained such positive appointments, p. 199. The utility of Revelation in establishing outward forms of worship is shown in *Leland's Deistical Writers*, Letter 27.

No. 31.

Revelation founded on Facts.

Upon the subject of this chapter, the reader may consult *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. ch. 3.; also (with some caution) *Chalmers's Evidence and Authority of the Christian Revelation*; *Reid's Essays*, vol. i. ch. 3.; *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. i. ch. 35. There are many valuable observations connected with this chapter to be found in *Magee's admirable work on Atonement*. See *Van Mildert's Sermons at Boyle's Lecture*, vol. ii. p. 96. 169. 182. 222. : but, above all, let the reader carefully digest *Tatham's "Chart and Scale of Truth,"* a work which displays the real nature of theological evidence, and the folly of looking for demonstration on subjects of probable reasoning. See vol. i. c. 11. sect. 3. See *Bonnet's Philosophical Enquiries concerning Christianity*, book. i. c. 1. p. 8. “As in matters of speculation and philosophical enquiry, the only guide of what is

right or wrong is reason and experience ; so in matters either of human testimony, or of divine revelation, the only certain rule of truth is this testimony, or the revelation itself.” *Clarke’s Introduction to the Doctrine of the Trinity.*
 Ήπειδεύμενος γαρ εστιν επι τοσούτον τ’ ακριβεῖς επιζητεῖν καθ’ εκαστον γενος, εφ’ οσον η τε πραγματος φυσις επιδεχεται.—Aristot. Eth. Nicom. lib. 1. cap. 3.

No. 32.

Divine Veracity.

“ All religion,” says Bishop *Sherlock*, “ ultimately resolves itself into trust or faith in God. Men are not apt to refer those conclusions to the head of faith which they collect from their own natural reason ; and yet often (should he not have said *always*?) these conclusions have no other support.” Discourse ii. vol. iv. p. 77—81. See also vol. i. Serm. 14. p. 368. See *Stillingfleet’s Origines Sacræ*, book ii. ch. 7. sect. 8. The principle which is laid down in this chapter forms the basis of that inductive philosophy of the human mind which it was the glory of Dr. *Reid* to have reduced into a system, and which has been so successfully supported by the writings of *Beattie*, *Oswald*, *Stewart*, &c. “ Whether our belief in these cases be agreeable to the eternal relations and fitnesses of things, and such as we should entertain, if we were per-

fectly acquainted with all the laws of nature, is a question which no person of a sound mind can have any scruple to answer, with the fullest assurance, in the affirmative. Certain it is, our constitution is so framed, that we must believe to be true, and conformable to universal nature, that which is intimated to us as such by the original suggestions of our own understandings. If these are fallacious, it is the Deity who makes them so; and therefore we can never rectify, or even detect the fallacy. But we cannot even suppose them fallacious, without violating our nature, nor, if we acknowledge a God, without the most absurd and most audacious impiety: for in this supposition it is implied, that we suppose the Deity a deceiver."

Beattie on Truth, part i. sect. 1. See also *Stewart's Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol. ii. c. 1. sect. 2., who evidently comprises the same principle amongst "his fundamental laws of human belief." See also his *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, p. 270. See *Clagget's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 2. and 3.; also *Clarke's Sermons on Faith in God*, vol. i. Serm. 1.; also *Tillotson*, vol. 3. Serm. 146. and 147.; *Chandler's Sermons*, vol. 2. Serm. 1.; Dr. *Tottie's Eleventh Sermon*; *Leng's Sermons*, p. 416, &c.; *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 25. 134. 197. Consult with attention Dr. *Tatham's admirable*

chapter on the “Theologic Principle.” See *Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii. ch. 1. “Earthly things are the expresssive types and resemblances of heavenly, on which resemblances a sublime analogy is founded, which is the great instrument of theologic truth ; and it is upon reasoning by this analogy from human testimony to divine, that its principle is constituted.” p. 22. Also *Price’s Review of Morals*, c. 5. p. 151—170.; also *Whitby on the Necessity of Revelation*, p. 45.

No. 33.

A Revelation superior to abstract Reasoning.

“ A direct and explicit law, given by Divine authority, is the very thing which such a short-sighted and imperfect order of beings as mankind were peculiarly in want of ; nor is any method so fit for governing a race of creatures generally unqualified for reasoning out with proper clearness and certainty the means of attaining happiness, as a distinct system of rules of conduct, guarded by proper sanctions. Is not all human government constituted on this foundation ?” — *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 321, &c. “ The philosophers were so far from rejecting this method of instruction, that they judged tradition to be the only sure

foundation of religious knowledge. Thus Cotta finds fault with Balbus for going about to prove by natural arguments the existence of the Gods." — See *Cicero de Nat. Deorum*, lib. 3. cap. 4. See *Campbell's Necessity of Revelation*, sect. 8. p. 394. The great advantages of historical over abstract theology, are shown by Lord *Hale* in his *Primitive Origination of Mankind*, sect. 4. ch. 6. p. 340. ; also by Bishop *Horsley*, vol. i. serm. 10. p. 213. ; also by *Grew* in his *Cosmologia Sacra*, book 3. chap. 6. See *Doddridge's* 103d lecture, who refutes the objections against a written Revelation in lecture 110.; *Skelton's Deism Revealed*, dialogue 2.; *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity* : " Though all this is legible in nature, which I have thence transcribed, yet if I had not another teacher, I know not whether I should ever have found it there. Nature is now a very hard book : when I have learnt it by my teacher's help, I can partly tell what is therein ; but at the first perusal I could not understand it. It requireth a great deal of time and study, and help, to understand that which, when we do understand, is as plain as the highway." — Page 193. See also *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ*, part 2. ch. 8. The peculiar advantages of an *historical Revelation* are eloquently described by Dr. *White* in his fifth sermon at the Bampton Lectures, p. 210.

The superior excellence of that evidence, on which Christianity depends, is shown by *Tatham in his Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii. sect. 1.; *Atterbury's Sermons*, vol. ii. serm. 2.; Bishop *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, ch. 1., in which the advantages of a Revelation over merely abstract reasoning, is shown with great force of argument. That the Christian Revelation is to be considered as historical, see *Butler's Analogy*, part 2. ch. 7. p. 321—328. The numerous advantages of Revealed over Natural Religion, are pointed out by *Whitby*, in his *Necessity of the Christian Revelation*.

No. 34.

A Revelation universal.

What is said in this chapter relates entirely to the dispensation, not to the knowledge of a Revelation; — considerations which, as Dr. Paley has remarked, are quite distinct from each other. “ I speak of the *Revelation* of Christianity, as distinct from Christianity itself. The dispensation may be universal. That part of mankind which never heard of Christ’s name, may, nevertheless, be redeemed, i. e. placed in a better situation, with regard to their future state, by his intervention, — may be the objects

of his benignity and intercession, as well as of the propitiatory virtue of his passion."— *Natural Theology*, p. 550. note. "All shades of injustice, and, indeed, all harsh appearances in this various economy of Providence, would be lost, if we would keep in mind, that every merciful allowance shall be made, and no more required of any one, than what might be equitably expected of him from the circumstances in which he was placed; i. e. in Scripture language, "that every man shall be rewarded according to his works." — *Butler's Analogy*, ch. 6. part 2. "Think not," says *Baxter*, "that all the mercies which Pagan nations have from God, are no acts of grace, nor have any tendency to their conversion and salvation. Doubtless, it is the same Redeemer who, before his incarnation, gave greater mercy to the Jews, and lesser to the Gentiles: he doth by these mercies oblige or lead men to repentance and gratitude," &c.— *Reasons for Christianity*, p. 400. "Why should we think that God, who is equally related to us all, should confine the effects of his goodness to a few persons, or a small part of mankind,— that He, whose bounty is so unconfined in the dispensation of temporal blessings, should be so partial and narrow in bestowing his greatest and best gifts," &c. — *Tillotson's 190th Sermon*.

No. 35.

Not universally successful.

See *Brown against Tindal*, p. 497. ; see *Weston's Enquiry into the Rejection of the Christian Miracles by the Heathen*, *passim* ; see *Paley's Evidences*, part 3. chap. 4. and chap. 6. “ That the present world does not actually become a state of moral discipline to man, even to the generality, i. e. that they do not improve or grow better in it, cannot be urged as a proof that it was not intended for moral discipline, by any who observe the analogy of nature.” — Part 1. chap. 6.

“ However clear the conviction, and captivating the charm of moral truth may be, men will both resist its evidence, and disgrace its beauty. However they may embrace and honour virtue in idea, as leading to the greatest good, they will reject and dishonour it in practice ; for passion, which is a contrary interest, will prove an overmatch for reason, and will prevail upon the will to cultivate apparent happiness at the shrine of pleasure.” — *Tatham's Chart and Scale*, vol. 1. p. 266. See also *Bonnet's Philosophical Enquiries concerning Christianity*, book 5. chap. 7. “ There are degrees of advantages, which, if men resist or misimprove, the Deity does not see fit to grant them more, whatever may be the consequence,” &c. —

Price on Providence, p. 70. Note. See also p. 135—153., in which there are many striking observations connected with the subject of this chapter; *Atterbury's Sermons*, vol. iv. sermon 2.; *Leland against Tindal*, vol. ii. chap. 16., and his *Deistical Writers*, Letter 27.

No. 36.

Moral Candour.

“The evidence of religion not appearing obvious may constitute one particular part of some men’s trial, in the religious sense, as it gives scope for a virtuous exercise, or for a vicious neglect, of their understanding, in examining, or not examining, into that evidence,” &c. — *Butler’s Analogy*, part 2. chap. 6. *Grotius de Veritate*, lib. 2. chap. 19. “In natural philosophy, in morals, and in every branch of human learning, as well as in Revelation, difficulties, occasioning diversities of opinion, subsist. But he would be a bad logician who should infer, that nothing was certain, because something was questionable in each of them, — that facts could not be established, because opinions could not be reconciled.” — *Bishop Watson’s Tracts*, vol. i. p. 445. See *Paley’s Evidences*, part 3. chap. 6. “The question is not whether Christianity possesses the *highest*

degree of evidence, but whether not having more evidence be a sufficient reason for rejecting that which we have," &c. — Page 342—347. The grounds and method of reasoning in divinity are admirably detailed by Tatham in his *Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii. chap. 2. see particularly p. 81—86. ; *Bonnet's Philosophical Enquiries*, book 5. chap. 8. See the conclusion to Dr. Price's *Review of Morals*, p. 452—462. ; *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. i. chap. 35. That the same candour is required also in Natural Theology, see *Aristot. Ethic. Nicom.* lib. 1. c. 3. and *Grot. de Jure*, lib. 2. c. 23.

No. 37.

Adapted to the Poor.

That a Religion published on divine authority is, in many respects, the best and plainest for all mankind, and particularly for the poor, is shown in *Gurdon's Boyle's Lectures*, serm. 13.

The excellency of a *Visible Church*, as the channel of religious instruction, is shown by *Butler in his Analogy*, part ii. ch. 1. p. 183.

“ The excellency of this institution will easily appear, if we consider it as inviting all kinds of persons to come and be hearers, and also the number of places which have been set apart for the performance of this religious exercise. I

have already observed, that only persons of letters, or of a liberal education, presumed to go to the schools of the philosophers, but now all ranks of men, the lowest and the most indigent of the people: all, yes, the old as well as the young, women as well as men, have always free access to the schools for the education of Christians.” *Gurdon’s Boyle’s Lectures*, serm. 14. p. 404. “To this excellent institution, the right and worthy notion of God and of his divine perfections, the just sense and understanding of the great duties of natural religion, and the universal belief and due apprehension of a future state of rewards and punishments, which the generality, even of the meaner and more ignorant sort of people are now possest of, is manifestly and undeniably almost wholly owing.” *Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 131. The extreme ignorance and profligacy of the lower orders amongst the ancients are shown by *Leland* and *Whitby*, in their respective works on the *Advantages of Christianity*.

No. 38.

Received by the Majority of the Learned.

See a collection of authorities in favour of the Christian Revelation, in *Ryan’s History of*

Religion, ch. 3. sect. 7. Also *Lindley Murray's Power of Religion exemplified in the Testimonies of Persons distinguished for their greatness, learning, and virtue.*

No. 39.

A Revelation gradual.

For a full exposition of this argument, see Bishop Law's *Theory of Religion*. “If neither all men could be made equally wise and perfect, nor religion be at once greatly communicated to all; if the present laws of our nature are the best that could be, and as such ought to remain inviolate, and we be left to the common methods of informing ourselves in natural as well as supernatural truth, it will follow that Christianity could not have been propagated otherwise, than, in fact, it is, viz. in a gradual, progressive, and partial manner.” P. 32. N. B. It is to be lamented, that the last (the fifth) edition of this book is contaminated with the peculiar notions of this prelate upon the consequences of the Fall, which render it so dangerous in the hands of a young theological student. As it was originally published, it is free from all objections of this kind, and is a very valuable work.

See also *Bishop Butler's Analogy*, part. 2. ch. 3. and 4. *Wilkin's Natural Religion*, book i. ch. 12. *Foster on Revelation*, ch. 2. *Sherlock on Prophecy*, discourses 1. and 2.; *Jortin on Christian Religion*, 175.; *Clarke's Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 238.; *Paley's Natural Theology*, p. 38.; *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 404—419., in which a summary view of the steps of revelation are delineated. “If Christianity be regarded as a providential instrument for the melioration of mankind, its progress and diffusion resemble that of other causes by which human life is improved. The diversity is not greater, nor the advance more slow in religion, than we find in learning, liberty, government, and laws. The Deity hath not touched the order of nature in vain. The Jewish religion produced great and permanent effects; the Christian religion hath done the same. It hath disposed the world to amendment; it hath put things in a train; it is by no means improbable that it may become universal, and that the world may continue in that state so long, as that the duration of its reign may bear a vast proportion to the time of its partial influence.” *Paley's Evidences*, part iii. ch. 6. p. 347. *Price's Review of Morals*, p. 437—445.; *Leland's Deistical Writers*, vol. i. Letter 2.

No. 40.

A Revelation permanent.

“ That religion which consists in believing the fall of man from a state of glory and communication with God, to a state of sorrow, humiliation, and estrangement from God, together with his restoration by a Messiah, has always been in the world. All things are passed away, and this remains for which all things were, &c. That this religion should have always kept its ground by continuing unalterable and inflexible, this is truly great and providential.”

Pascal's Thoughts, sect. 2.

“ Can any man bring himself to believe, that such a scheme could have been begun with the beginning of the world, carried on through a succession of 4000 years, by the instrumentality of a number of different persons who had no opportunity of concerting measures together, exhibiting to the view of mankind all that is great, important, and useful to be known and practised; all the Divine dispensations with respect to a species of rational and moral agents, the scope and purpose of the whole being wise, good, and worthy of God, and suitable to the wants of men, uniform in its purpose throughout; teaching one grand and useful lesson from the

beginning to the end, agreeing with itself, with the constitution and course of nature, the strain of history and the natural reason of man, in which there appears a perfect agreement between types and antitypes, doctrines and precepts, predictions and completions, laws and sanctions, pretensions and truth, and the whole leading to the highest perfection and improvement of human nature — can any man bring himself to believe such an universal and comprehensive scheme to be really no more than human contrivance?" *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 357.

No. 41.

Would promote Happiness, &c.

" When any Religion is, as it were, incorporated with the ordinary providence of God in his moral government, the credibility of it may, in a great measure, be determined by its actual and visible influence on the welfare of mankind. Though ultimately directed to higher ends, it is still relative to the constitution and circumstances of man ; and as its best evidence must arise from the conformity it has to the attributes of the Deity, it is difficult to conceive how any Religion can be supposed to derive its

origin from him, which is hostile to the temporal happiness of those to whom it is given," &c. — *White's 9th Sermon*, part 1. p. 403. See also *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, vol. i. ch. 22. ; also vol. ii. chap. 13. ; also *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. i. chap. 18. ; also *Fuller's "Gospel its own Witness,"* part 1. chap. 6. and 7. ; also Bishop *Porteus's Essay on the Beneficial Effects of Christianity on the Temporal Concerns of Mankind*; also *Jortin on Christian Religion*, p. 143—154. ; *Bates's Rural Philosophy*, p. 264. ; see *Ryan's History of Religion*, chap. 3. ; *Paley's Evidences*, part 3. chap. 7.

No. 42.

Supported by Men of Probity.

" It much confirms my belief in Christianity to observe, that commonly the most true and serious Christians are the holiest, most honest, and most righteous men; and that the worse men are, the greater enemies they are to Christianity: and then to think, how incredible it is, that God should lead all the worst men into the truth, and should leave the best in an error." — *Baxter's Reasons of Christianity*, p. 353. See *Nichols's Conference with a Theist*,

part 4. vol. iv. p. 283. ; see *Lindley Murray's Power of Religion exemplified by the Testimonies of Men of eminent Learning and Piety.*

No. 43.

Pre-eminent over false Revelations.

“ It must be granted, that the evidence of miracles seems so strong, as to render it highly probable that God will not suffer it to be applied in proof of a falsehood, without appearing by miracle to turn the balance on the side of truth ; for should he suffer them often to be prophaned, to confirm what is evidently contrary to the principles of natural religion, or common sense, they would gradually grow into such suspicion and contempt, as we can hardly suppose his wisdom would permit.” — *Doddridge's Lectures*, part 5. prop. 94. “ It greatly confirms my belief in Christianity, to find, that there is no other religion professed in the world that an impartial man can rest in.” — *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, p. 352. See Christianity contrasted with Mahometanism, in the fine Sermons of Dr. *White*, at the Bampton Lectures.

No. 44.

*To display the free Mercy of God, and to humble
the Pride of Man.*

“ Though repentance be, as we have observed, a part of natural religion, yet it seems to have been little practised by many of the Gentiles. Amendment of life is a comely and commendable thing; and the Pagans certainly approved it: but that part of repentance, which is a religious sorrow, and acknowledgment of past offences to God our Maker and Governor, and prayers to him to forgive them, the Gentiles seem, in a great measure, to have overlooked, both in the course of their lives and at the close of them.” — *Jortin on Christian Religion*, p. 265. That neither the expression, nor the virtue of *humility* was entirely unknown to the ancients (though greatly neglected by them), is shown by the same author, p. 285. Note.

“ Considering how greatly and how universally pride prevails in the minds of men, how detrimental it is to almost all the branches of virtue, and how it taints and debases many actions which would otherwise be most excellent, as, likewise, how ill becomes any creature, and, especially, a mortal and sinful creature, it is exceedingly probable, that the whole series of a

Divine Revelation would evidently tend to exalt God, and to humble man." — *Tillotson*, vol. iii. p. 442. *Duchal's Presumptive Evidence*, p. 111—118; *Butler's Analogy*, part 2. chap. 3.; *Doddridge's Lectures*, prop. 95.; see also *Magee on Atonement*, vol. i. numb. 15. *Leland against Tindal, Introduction*, p. 59—61.

No. 45.

To diffuse Natural Religion.

" It may be expected," says *Doddridge*, " that a Revelation should confirm some important truths known, by the light of nature, and should clear up the difficulties which hang on some articles in which our happiness is much concerned; particularly, that it should give us firmer assurance of the pardon of sin, in a way consistent with the divine justice, and that it should discover more of a future state of happiness, perhaps, also, of the entrance of sin and calamity in the world." — *Lectures*, part 5. prop. 95. 2. The great difficulties under which mankind laboured, with regard to the doctrines and duties of Natural Religion, are shown by *Clarke* in his *Evidences*, prop. 5. and 7. See *Leng's Sermons*, p. 73. and p. 344—363.; *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*,

passim ; *Watson's Popular Evidences*, part 2. chap. 3. ; *Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things*, passim ; *Berriman's Boyle's Lectures*, serm. 1. and 2. ; *Clarke's Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*, vol. ii. p. 161. ; also *Woodward's Boyle's Lectures*, serm. 1. and 2. ; also by *Clarke* in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. 5, 6. *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 438. *Whitby's Necessity of Revelation*, ch. 4.

No. 46.

Final Cause of the Creation.

“ The main business of natural philosophy,” says Newton, as quoted by Professor Stewart, “ is to argue from phenomena, without feigning hypotheses, and to deduce causes from effects, till we come to the very first cause, which certainly is not mechanical, and not only to unfold the mechanism of the world, but chiefly to resolve these and such like questions : — *Whence is it that Nature does nothing in vain, and whence arises all that order and beauty which we see in the world?* *How came the bodies of animals to be contrived with so much art, and for what ends were their several parts?* *Was the eye contrived without skill in optics, and the ear without knowledge of sounds?* ” — See *Stewart's Philosophy*

of the Human Mind, vol. ii. sect. 4. chap. 6. There is great beauty in the following sentiments of Maclaurin, which are equally applicable to Natural and Moral Philosophy : — “ As we arise in philosophy towards the First Cause, we obtain more extensive views of the constitution of things, and see his influences more plainly. We perceive that we are approaching to Him, from the simplicity and generality of the powers or laws we discover, — from the difficulty which we find to account for them mechanically, — from the more complete beauty and contrivance that appears to us in the scheme of his works as we advance, and from the hints we obtain of greater things yet out of our reach. From what we are able to understand of Nature, we may entertain the greater expectations of what will be discovered to us, if ever we shall be allowed to penetrate to the First Cause himself, and see the whole scheme of his works as they are really derived from him, when our imperfect philosophy shall be completed.” — See his *Account of Newton’s Philosophical Discoveries*, book 1. chap. 1. and 2. The same sublime anticipations which prompted Sir Isaac Newton to hint, “ that if natural philosophy, in all its parts, by pursuing the inductive method, shall at length be perfected, the bounds of *Moral Philosophy* will also be enlarged,” may be ex-

tended to that connection which we have endeavoured to establish between Revealed and Natural Theology,—that in proportion as the philosophy of the human mind is better understood, and more successfully cultivated, fresh evidences of the wisdom and suitability of Revelation will arise, till at length it shall be viewed as the end, and scope, and design of creation, *tanquam portus et sabbatum humanarum contemplationum omnium.* — *Bacon, de Augment. Scient. lib. 3. cap. 1.*

“The Divine Knowledge,” says Bishop *Horsley*, “is indeed too excellent for man, and could not have been otherwise imparted to him than in scraps and fragments: but these are then only understood when the human mind, by just and dexterous combinations, is able to restore them, in some imperfect degree, to the shadow and semblance of that simplicity and unity, in which all truth originally exists in the self-furnished intellect of God.” *Sermons, vol. ii. p. 24.*

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

PART II.

No. 47.

On the Possible Truth of Christianity.

“ WITH regard to Christianity, it will be observed that there is a middle, between a full satisfaction of the truth of it, and a satisfaction of the contrary. The middle state of mind between these two, consists in a serious apprehension, that it may be true ; joined with some doubt whether it be so. And this, upon the best judgment I am able to make, is as far as any sceptic can at all be supposed to go, who has had true Christianity with the proper evidence of it laid before him, and has in any tolerable measure considered them.” *Butler’s Analogy*, part ii. conclusion. See *Skelton’s Deism Revealed*, dialogue 5. vol. ii. “ No one, in his senses, ever thought that it would have been better that the body should have been made to perform its functions like a clock once wound up, than that it should be continually, from moment to moment, at the command of

the mind to actuate it at pleasure. In the same manner, with respect to the moral world, it is not lessening the wisdom or the power of the moral governor to suppose interpositions necessary," &c. *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 361. *Seed's Sermons*, vol. iii. serm. 2. *Price's Dissertations*, towards the conclusion.

No. 48.

On the Desirableness of the Christian Revelation.

See many admirable reflections on the importance of Christianity, supposing it to be a divine revelation, in *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. ch. 1. The importance of Christianity, as an instrument of temporal happiness, is shown with great force by *Ryan* in his *History of the Effects of Religion*. Also by *Leland* in his *Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, part 1. ch. 22. See *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, book iv. sect. 3. "We have no where but in Scripture, a display of the wonders of Divine mercy towards a fallen guilty race of beings. We have no rational account anywhere else of a method for restoring a world ruined by vice. In Scripture we have this great desideratum," &c. p. 341. "Of what a revelation discloses to mankind, one, and only one, question can properly be asked: — Was it of importance to mankind to

know, or to be better assured concerning it? In this question, when we turn our thoughts to the great Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a future judgment, no doubt can be possibly entertained. He who gives me riches or honours does nothing—he who even gives me health, does little in comparison with that which lays before me just grounds for expecting a restoration to life, and a day of account and retribution; which thing Christianity hath done for millions.” *Paley’s Evidences*, vol. ii. part. 3. ch. 8. *Price’s Dissertations*, p. 436. *Clarke’s Evidences*, p. 289—299. *Leland against Tindal*, part 1. ch. 5. and 6.; *Beattie’s Evidences*, vol. i. ch. 1.

No. 49.

On the Teachableness of the Human Mind as connected with the Truth of the Christian Revelation.

Whoever wishes to see the argument of this chapter set forth with due strength of reasoning should consult *Brown’s Essays on the Characteristics*, essay 3. sect. 3. The suitableness of Christianity to the teachable nature of man is shown by *Skelton* in his second and third dialogues of “*Deism Revealed.*” Also by *Clarke* in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 283. See also *Felton’s* preface to his sermons,

in which this subject is treated with great ability ; also *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, part 2. ch. 2. *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part 2. ch. 6. and 7.; *Whitby's Necessity of Revelation*, ch. 1.; *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 177.; *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*. “ Reason consists of perception and judgment, and operates by comparison, and its office is to judge of evidences, to form and to apply axioms, and to trace similitudes ; so that it is properly the instrument of truth.” Vol. i. p. 34. See also *Bonnet's Philosophical Enquiries concerning Christianity*, in which the credibility of testimony, and its application to the evidence of the Gospel, is finely illustrated, book 2. ch. 1. and 2. *Pearson on the Creed*, article 1. Τρια εστι τα αιλια δι' α πιστευομεν, εξω των αποδειξεων εστι δε ταυτα, φρονησις, και αρετη, και ευνοια. Vide *Aristot. Rhetor.* lib. 2. c. 1.; *Locke*, book 4. ch. 15.; *Reid on the Human Mind*, sect. 24.

No. 50.

On the Evidence of Miracles.

“ There are many events, not miraculous, which yet have a previous incredibility in them similar to that of miracles, and by no means inferior to it. The events I mean are all such phenomena in nature as are quite new and strange to us. No one can doubt whether these are capa-

ble of full proof by testimony." *Price's Dissertations*, p. 416.

"The course of nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else than the will of God producing certain effects in a continued, constant, and uniform manner, which course, or manner of acting, in every moment perfectly arbitrary, is as easy to be altered at any time as to be preserved." *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. 14. p. 216.; *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 433—439.

That miracles, when well attested, are the best proofs of a divine revelation, has been admitted by several distinguished infidels, see the admission of *Collins*, *Woolston*, and *Spinosa*, in *Leland's Deistical Writers*, letter 36. On the miracles of Scripture, as a connected chain, see *Brown on the Characteristics*, essay 3. sect. 4.; also *Butler's Analogy*, part ii. ch. 7.; *Atterbury's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm 8. See *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, book iv. sect. 3. p. 383—390. See also *Bonnet's Enquiries*, book ii. ch. 3. and 4. "Miracles are the highest attestations which can be given to the truth and divinity of any doctrine; and supposing the doctrine not to be plainly unworthy of God, and contrary to those natural notions which men have of God and of religion, we can have no greater evidence of the truth of it than miracles. They are such an argument as in its own nature is apt to persuade

and induce belief." *Tillotson*, vol. ii. Serm. 63. p. 396.

Upon the evidence of miracles as connected with the philosophy of facts, see *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii. ch. 2. sect. 1. "The facts which our Saviour laid as an important ground, from which men were to reason to the truth of his religion, are as palpable to the senses, and as easy to the apprehensions of all men, as it is possible for any facts to be; differing only from the most common and ordinary that occur in one particular, which difference was as clearly to be apprehended by the plainest conceptions as they were themselves. It is to this important difference that they owe their evidence, for whereas other facts are the effects of common and ordinary causes, these were still more obviously the immediate effects of a most uncommon and extraordinary cause." P. 66. See also Bishop *Warburton's Divine Legation*, book 9. ch. 5.; *Atterbury's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. 8. See *Campbell on Miracles*; *Beattie on Truth*, sect. 8.

One cannot but admire the *modesty* of an ancient philosopher, when speaking of the most suspicious kind of miraculous interference: Περὶ δὲ τῆς μανίκης τῆς εὐ τοῖς υπνοῖς γενομένης, καὶ λεγομένης συμβαίνειν απὸ τῶν εινυπνιῶν· εἰς καλαφρούειν ράδιον, εἰς πεισθῆναι. *Aristot. De Divin.* vol. i. p. 697. edit. *Du Val.*

No. 51.

On the Analogy between Christianity and Nature.

For an extensive illustration of the reasoning contained in this chapter, I would beg leave to refer to the admirable work of Dr. Tatham, entitled the “*Chart and Scale of Truth.*” See particularly his remarks on the “*Theologic Principle,*” vol. ii. ch. 2., in which he adduces many instances of analogical reasoning from the inspired writers. “In his kingdoms both of nature and of grace,” says this powerful writer, “the God of all truth is wonderfully consistent in the mode of its dispensation, and analogy is that instrument of reason, by which in one as well as in the other, man is enabled to ascend from earth to heaven. From the curves and motions of projectiles, the astronomer rises by a sublime analogy to those of the celestial bodies, just as we see the theologian rising from the testimony of men, to the testimony of God; and as those stupendous orbs, rolling in silent majesty through the vast regions of space, are infinitely more exalted and sublime than the projectiles by which they are illustrated and explained; so this divine testimony, which is conveyed to the apprehension of men, and made a principle of reasoning by its analogy to human, is infinitely

superior, more exalted and sublime, in proportion as God in knowledge, fidelity, and all perfection is superior to man. “*The Witness of God is greater.*” P. 26.

Upon the suitableness of Christianity to the nature of man, and to his situation in the world, see *Sherlock’s Discourses*, vol. iv. p. 100.; also *Spectator*, No. 574.; also *Tillotson’s Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 46. and vol. ii. Serm. 49.; See also *Scott’s Christian Life*, vol. ii. ch. 2. “Nihil autem magis congruit cum hominis naturá, quām Christi Philosophia, quæ pene nihil aliud agit, quām ut naturam collapsam suæ restituat innocentiae.” *Erasmus in Matt. ch. 11.*; see also Bishop *Taylor’s* preface to his *Life of Christ*; also *Fuller’s* “*Gospel its own Witness,*” part 2. ch. 2. p. 151. “The plan of redemption adopted by God is perfectly consonant to the inclinations most prevalent in the heart of man. It operates both in his hopes and fears; without hope, malice would carry itself to the last extremity; without fear, the passions would know no bounds.” See *Haller’s Letters to his Daughter on the Christian Religion*, p. 252. “The Maker of the earth on which we live does not appear, by any thing we see in it, to have intended it for a place of pleasure and indulgence, but of discipline and trial.” *Ogden’s Sermons*, vol. i. p. 167. See the argument of this chapter illus-

trated by *Clarke* in relation to all the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. 13. p. 183 —216. “ I find in general,” says Baxter, “ that there is an admirable concord between natural verity and the gospel of Christ, and that grace is medicinal to nature, and that where natural light endeth, supernatural beginneth, and that the superstructure which Christ hath built upon nature is wonderfully adapted to its foundation.” *Reasons for Christianity*, part ii. ch. 5. See the good effects of Christianity displayed by Dr. *Ryan* in his *History of Religion*.

“ Nor are there wanting various particulars in the divine government of the moral world, analogous in a lower sphere to the grand scheme of redemption. How much are we in the present state dependent on others for various advantages both spiritual and temporal? What gift of God do we receive without the interposition of some agent? Is there not in this something similar to our receiving the inestimable advantages of the perfect knowledge of our duties, the pardon of our sins, and all the blessings which religion bestows through the channel of a mediator between God and man? Our Saviour taking upon himself certain vicarious sufferings, by which we are to gain great advantages, is by no means foreign to the common

course of the world, in which we see very great hazards run, and actual inconveniences suffered by friends and relations for each other. He and his Apostles allow of this analogy.

“ In the common course of things, thoughtlessness and folly, which, though not innocent, are pitiable, are the causes of very terrible misfortunes, and are, therefore, in many cases, provided for by the goodness of the wise governor of the world, so that they do not always prove irretrievable. A thoughtless person, by intemperance, runs himself into a quarrel, in which he is wounded: without help, he must perish; and it is not to be expected that he should be miraculously recovered. Is it not the divine goodness which has furnished the materials necessary for his cure, made provisions in the formation of the human body for the accidents which it might be liable to, so that every hurt should not prove fatal to it, and engaged us to be kind and helpful to one another, so that we should be sure of comfort from one another in distress? In the same manner, and by the same goodness, exerted in a higher degree, Revelation teaches us, a remedy is provided for the recovery to the divine mercy of a fallen and offending order of beings. In the case of the unfortunate person here exemplified, his being convinced of his folly, his being heartily concerned for it, and his resolving

never more to be guilty of the like, is not sufficient for his recovery, any more than repentance and reformation alone could be supposed sufficient to put offenders on a footing with innocent beings." — *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, part 4. sect. 1. p. 331. "The knowledge of nature is favourable to virtue, as it supplies analogies that are of use to obviate objections against the credibility of Religion. If Nature and Christianity proceed from the same author, it is reasonable to expect between them such features of resemblance, so much of the same style and character, as would afford evidence to their common original. Accordingly, such characters of resemblance to each other are found actually to exist. In particular, it is found, that whatever objections lie against the Christian Religion, the same bear with equal force against the constitution and course of Nature; so that whoever admits the latter to be from God, cannot, consistently with his own principles, deny the general credibility, that the former may have proceeded from the same original." — *Bates's Rural Philosophy*, p. 188. *Beattie's Evidences*, vol. ii. ch. 5. Χρημενι τοι γε τον απαξ παραδεξαμενον τα κλισαγίος τον κοσμον είναι ταυτας τας γραφας πεπεισθαι, οτι οσα περι της κλισεως απαντα τοις ζητεσι τον περι αυτης λογου, ταυτα και περι των γραφων. *Origen. Philocal.* p. 23. edit. *Spencer.*

No. 52.

An Account of the Creation.

“ The opinions of the ancients respecting the creation of the world, are so confused and contradictory, that nothing of any consequence can be deduced from them.” — See *Encyc. Britannica*, article *Creation*. “ They all agreed, however,” says Aristotle, “ that it was impossible any thing could be made out of nothing.” — Article *Metaphysics*, p. 664. See also *Bayle’s Dictionary*, article *Epicurus*, note 5. ; see also the first volume of *Stillingfleet’s Origines Sacræ*, wherein is shown the great uncertainty of the opinions of the Pagans, and the credibility of the Scripture accounts ; see, particularly, book 3. chap. 2. ; also *Enfield’s History of Philosophy*, book 2. chap. 3. and chap. 9. sect. 1. ; and *Cudworth’s System*, vol. i. chap. 3. sect. 16. That the Jews, however, believed in a creation *ex nihilo*, is plain from the second book of Maccabees — “ Look upon the Heaven, and all that therein is, and consider that God made them out of things that were not.” — See the article *Theology* in *Encyc. Britannica* ; also *Pearson on the Creed*, Article 1. ; *Doddridge’s Lectures*, Lect. 24. ; see also *Leland’s Advantage of Revelation*, part 1. chap. 13. The

reasonableness of the Scripture account of the Creation is shown by *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 186—188. and p. 238.; also by Dr. *Barrow*, in his fine discourse on *the Frame of the World*, vol. ii. Serm. 6.; also *Shuckford's Dissertation on the Creation and Fall of Man*; also *Leng's Sixth Sermon at Boyle's Lectures*; and *Campbell's Necessity of Revelation*, sect. 8. p. 386.; see also Dr. *Ireland's "Paganism and Christianity compared,"* p. 305.; also Bishop *Wilkins's Natural Religion*, lib. 1. chap. 5.; *Wollaston's Religion of Nature*, p. 164. sect. 5.; *Butler's Analogy*, part 2. chap. 7.; *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 325—342. Upon the sentiments of the Heathens respecting the Creation of the world, see *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, chap. 12. p. 128.; also *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, vol. i. book 3. chap. 3. and 4.; also vol. ii. book 3. chap. 9.; also *Leland's View of the Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 30. p. 148.; see Lord *Hale's Primitive Origination of Mankind*, particularly sect. 4. chap. 2.; *Grew's Cosmologia Sacra*, chap. 1.; also the fine discourse of Dr. *Blair on the Creation of the World*, vol. 2. Sermon 11. “The natural evidence of the truth of the Scripture about the Creation of the World, doth make it the more credible to me in all

things else ; for that is a thing which none but God himself could reveal to us." — *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part 2. chap. 8. See *Nichol's First Conference with a Theist*, p. 93. vol. i. ; see *Ryan's History of Religion*, chap. 5. That the origin of language bears witness to Revelation, is shown by *Van Mildert*, in his *Boyle's Lect.* vol. ii. p. 79., and by *Magee*, vol. ii. Note 53.

" It is only in Scripture that a rational account of this world is given : for in Scripture it is represented as God's world. The inhabitants of it are everywhere spoken of in no other way of consequence, than in the view of their being his creatures, formed for religion, and an immortal state of happiness after this life, and at present under laws and rules of discipline, to train them up for the great end of their being." *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 340. The gross ignorance of the heathens respecting the origin and creation of the world, is shown by Dr. *Woodward*, in his first Sermon at *Boyle's Lectures*. " Si a Judæis discedas, nescio an ullus antiquorum philosophorum mundum negavit æternum esse. Omnes mihi æternum professi videntur esse mundum : hoc uno verò disjunguntur, quod nonnulli, ut Aristoteles, formam et materiam simul hujus orbis; alii verò, quorum facile princeps Plato, *materiam* tantùm æternam, *formam* verò a Deo comparatam, dixe-

runt.” *Mosheim’s Notes on Cudworth.* See also *Sumner’s Records of the Creation*, particularly part 1. ch. 3. sect. 1. and 8.; *Whitby on Revelation*, ch. 3.

No. 53.

Man originally innocent.

The doctrine of man’s original innocence might also be deduced, with considerable credibility, from the make and constitution of our minds. All our passions and affections seem to have proper and legitimate uses, to which they can be applied. “It is true,” says Dr. *Price*, “that those principles, the necessity of which to the preservation and happiness of the species, we so evidently see, often prove in event the causes of many grievous evils: but they are plainly intended for good. These evils are the accidental, not the proper consequences of them. They proceed from the unnatural abuse and corruption of them, and happen entirely through our own fault, contrary to what appears to be the constitution of our nature and the will of our Maker. It is impossible to produce one instance in which the original direction of nature is evil, or to any thing not upon the whole the best.” *Review of the principal Questions of Morals*, ch. 3. p. 127. Does not this view of human nature, when contrasted with the general

prevalence of vice, betoken our being in an unnatural condition? See *Hutcheson's Essay on the Passions*, sect. 3. and 4.

The doctrine of three states of the world — that all was created fair and good in its kind ; that there has been a fall and impairing of this original goodness; and that there shall be a restitution of things to their ancient beauty and perfection, is mentioned by Jortin, amongst the conformities between Pagan philosophy and the Christian revelation. See his *Discourses concerning the Christian Religion*, page 118. The Mosaic account of the creation of man in a state of innocence and dignity, is vindicated by *Leland against Tindal*, vol. ii. ch. 14. See also *South's Sermon on Man's being made in the Image of God*, vol. i. Serm. 2. ; also *Lord Hale's Primitive Origination of Mankind*, sect. 4. c. 2. ; also *Ritchie on Revelation*, vol. i. page 104—108. ; also *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 8. “ What can be more agreeable to right reason, or have better effect, when really believed, than that God made man at first upright and happy, in a state of moral rectitude ; that sin, which was owing to his wilful defection from God, was the source of all the evils to which human nature is now exposed, and which are therefore chargeable, not on God, or on his original constitution, but on man him-

self ; that mankind are now in a lapsed state, but not forsaken of God, who, in his great goodness, provided a remedy, and has been pleased to assure them of his readiness to receive them into his grace and favour, and to accept and reward their repentance and sincere obedience.” *Leland’s View*, vol ii. letter 30.

“ The only true and fair way of judging of the Gospel, is to consider what is the true state of mankind in the world. If men are in a state of purity and innocence, no redemption is wanting, and the methods prescribed in the Gospel bear no relation to their circumstances. But if men have every where sinned, the law of nature cannot help them to those blessings which by the law of nature they have forfeited.” *Sherlock’s Discourses*, vol. i. p. 68. See also *Discourse V.* in the same volume; also *Chandler’s Sermons*, vol. iv. Serm. 1. and 2.; *Doddridge’s 164th Lecture*; *Stillingfleet’s Origines Sacrae*, book iii. ch. 3. sect. 4. See the opinions of the ancients respecting the creation and fall of man, collected by *Barrow*, vol. ii. Serm. 8. “ What can be so just a vindication of the goodness of God, and consequently so necessary, in order to maintaining in our minds worthy and honourable notions concerning Him, as the doctrine that God created man at first upright, and that the original of all evil and misery is sin? the want of a

clear knowledge of which truth extremely perplexed the heathen world, and made many recur to that most absurd fiction of a self-existent evil principle.” *Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, page 212. “The design of creating the human species was to put them in a way towards such happiness as should be fit and suitable to the nature of free moral agents. This rendered it necessary to place them in a state of discipline, the only possible method of learning virtue; and we accordingly find a lesson of obedience prescribed them, immediately on their coming into existence—a law, to all appearance, very easy to keep—only to abstain from one particular indulgence, being at liberty, within the bounds of moderation, with respect to others. In the state of things at that time, it would not have been easy to prescribe a particular trial which should not turn upon the government of passion or appetite. Being the only two on the face of the earth, they could not be guilty of a breach of duty to their fellow-creatures; and, with the frequent intercourse which Scripture gives us reason to think they had with angels and celestial beings, they could hardly bring themselves to any positive violation of their duty to God, and were under no temptation to neglect it. That they should fall into this fatal trans-

gression of the first law given for this trial of their obedience, was to be expected from beings newly created, and wholly unexperienced, &c. Pitiable, undoubtedly, their case was, and the rather, as they were misled by temptations from a wicked being, more experienced than themselves. Accordingly their case, and that of the rest of the species, has found such pity, and such interpositions have been made in their favour, as we have reason, from Scripture, to suppose that other offending beings have not been favoured with.” *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, page 344. See also *Clarke’s Enquiry into the Origin of Evil*, vol. ii. page 216.

“ The evidence of the moral sense is the dictate of conscience, which reigns predominant in the human breast, as a remaining spark of its native light, and as an indelible witness of that consummate purity and perfection in which it was originally created.” *Tatham’s Chart*, p. 225.

“ Scintilla quædam est, et tanquam reliquiæ pristinæ et primitivæ puritatis.” *Bacon de Augm. Scient.* lib. 9. cap. i. See also *Hutcheson’s Illustrations of the Moral Sense*, and his *Essay on the Passions*, sect. 3. and 4., and his *Enquiry into our Ideas concerning Beauty and Virtue*.

“ Unless we suppose some tendency towards perfection to be still inherent in our nature, some traces of our original greatness, some linea-

ments of our divine origin, how shall we explain the preference which has been shown, in all ages, for those actions which tend to the general good, over those which have for their object the advancement of the individual ? How shall we explain the efforts made by so many wise and great men, in ancient times, to disperse the darkness around them, and penetrate into that pure region, where they might contemplate the true images of God and Virtue ? How shall we explain that noble aphorism of the old philosophy, “ that vice is more contrary to the nature of man than pain, and sickness, and death, and all the evils which besiege mortality ? ” Certainly it was not intended to assert that man is, in the common sense of the word, *naturally* virtuous. The whole world supplied but too sad and convincing evidence of the contrary. What was intended must evidently be this : that virtue is the *proper* perfection of man’s moral nature ; that vice is destructive of the soul, as disease and death are of the body ; and that (the soul being far more excellent and permanent than the body) whatever is fatal to the former is more truly contrary to his nature than those things which assail only the latter ; — a truth so momentous, and, in the opinion of Bishop *Butler*, so manifest, that it has been adopted by that profound writer as the simplest practical basis of all ethical science.” *Bowdler’s Select Pieces*, vol. 2.

p. 73. “The evils to which we are exposed in this imperfect state appear to be the *accidental*, not natural effects of our constitution.” See *Balguy on Divine Benevolence*, p. 113—128.

No. 54.

Founded on the Fall.

“That mankind are now subject to the evils which Moses mentions as the consequence of the fall, viz. barrenness of the ground, pains and sickness in child-bearing, diseases and death, is undeniable. The only difference between the Mosaic account, and that of those who ridicule it is, that they suppose all the evils to be the necessary effects of the original constitution and appointment of God, but Moses supposes the original constitution of things to have been much more happy. Which of these suppositions is most honourable to God, and most likely, if believed, to have a good effect upon the minds of men, may be left to any individual to determine.” *Leland’s Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 30. p. 161. See Lord *Hale’s Primitive Origination of Mankind*, p. 355.; also *Magee on the Atonement*, vol. i. p. 96—128.; also *Dr. Watts’s Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*, p. 12—92. and quest. 8. where this subject is treated with great ability, and the reasoning is supported by numerous appeals to ancient writers. See also *Archbishop*

King's Sermon on the Fall of Man, at the end of Bishop Law's edition of his “*Origin of Evil*.” *Jortin on Christian Religion*, ch. 7. “The single principle of human depravity, supposing it to be true, will fully account for all the moral disorders in the world; and the actual existence of those disorders, unless they can be better accounted for, must go to form the truth of the principle, and by consequence of the Christian system which rests upon it.” *Fuller's “Gospel its own Witness,”* p. 153. The credibility which Christianity derives from the doctrine of the fall, considered as accounting for the present state of human nature, may be seen finely illustrated by Bishop Butler in his *Sermons on Human Nature*, and in *Sumner's Records*, part 3. ch. 3.

The errors into which the ancients were betrayed by their ignorance of the doctrine of the fall, considered as historical fact, are pointed out by Leland in his *Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, vol. ii. part ii. ch. 6—10. See Doddridge's *Lectures*, prop. 133. and 134. and 135. “It greatly confirms my belief of the Holy Scriptures, to find by certain experience, the original and universal depravity of man's nature, how great it is, and wherein it doth consist, exactly agreeing with the sacred words, when no other religion has made a full discovery of it.” *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, part ii.

p. 350. “ It is the established order of nature, that what is propagated should resemble the stock from which it is produced, and should partake of its soundness or feel its infirmity. This principle obtains in every thing that hath life; it is as true of vegetables as of animals. The husbandman builds his expectations of a good crop on the soundness of his seed; bad seasons and untoward accidents may prevent the thriving of the best; but if the seed be originally vitiated, no future culture can remove the malady. We may lament the lot of an infant who is born of parents whose constitutions have been ruined by excessive drinking, or any other kind of intemperance, or who are themselves afflicted with any hereditary disease, but we are not to presume to accuse God of injustice for suffering it to come into the world under such disadvantages, and we must not expect that he will reverse the order of nature for its sake,” &c. Bishop *Watson's Tracts*, vol. i. p. 403. That the heathens could not satisfactorily account for the origin of evil, is shown at large by *Clarke* in his *Enquiry into the Cause and Origin of Evil*; also by *Berriman* in his first *Sermon at Boyle's Lectures*; also by *Gurdon* in his fifth *Sermon* at the same; and by *Whitby on the Necessity of Revelation*, ch. 5. See also *Butler's Analogy*, part 2. ch. 5.

No. 55.

Delineates Man faithfully.

“ No religion,” says *Pascal*, “ but the Christian, has described man as the most excellent of visible creatures, and at the same time the most miserable. Some, having apprehended the reality of his excellence, have censured as mean and ungrateful, the low opinions which men generally entertain of their own condition. Others, knowing the unhappy effects of his baseness and misery, have exposed as ridiculously vain, those notions of grandeur which are so natural to us.” See *Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, prop. 11. and 12.; *Watts’s Ruin and Recovery*, quest. 8. That the Scriptures have given a real representation of mankind, is shown by *Stillingfleet* in his *Origines Sacrae*, book iii. ch. 6. sect. 5. *Sumner’s Records*, part iii. ch. 2. and 3.; *Haller on the Christian Religion*, letter 2. and 13.; *Maclaine’s Letters to Jenyns*, particularly letter 4.

No. 56.

World suited to Christianity.

The fact that we are in such a state of trial and probation as both reason and revelation inform us, has lately received a remarkable illustration by the developement of the principle of

population. See *Malthus on Population*, vol. ii. book iv. ch. 1. and 2., in which he shows that moral restraint is the only effectual mode of improving the condition of society. The following passage from this unjustly calumniated author, will explain the views in which he considers this doctrine in relation to the precepts of Christianity. “ I have always considered the principle of population as a law peculiarly suited to a state of discipline and trial. Indeed, I believe, that in the whole range of the laws of nature with which we are acquainted, not one can be pointed out which in so remarkable a manner tends to strengthen and confirm the scriptural views of the state of man on earth,” &c. See *Additions to the Essay*, p. 325. ; also Mr. Sumner’s “ *Records of the Creation*,” vol. ii.

That Christianity not only supposes us to be placed in a state of trial, but has some trials peculiar to itself, is shown by Bishop *Sherlock*, vol. ii. discourses 7. 8. and 9. ; also *Clarke’s Sermons*, vol. xi. Serm. 16. ; also *Paley’s 33d Sermon*. ; also Abp. *Secker’s Sermon on taking up the Cross*. See Bishop *Taylor’s* fine *Discourses*, vol. ii. Serm. 9—13. and vol. i. Serm. 15. and 16. ; also his *Life of Christ*, vol. i. discourse 4. sect. 8. ; also *Tottie’s 2d Sermon*. There are many striking illustrations of this argument in *Baxter’s Saint’s Rest*, particularly part 2. ch. 9. part 3. ch. 12. and part 4. ch. 1.

Divine Unity.

“ What can be a more necessary and excellent foundation of true Religion, than that doctrine which the Christian Religion clearly and distinctly teaches us concerning the nature and attributes of the One only true God ; without any of that ambiguity and doubtfulness, those various and inconsistent opinions and conjectures, those uncertain, and, oftentimes, false reasonings, concerning the nature of God, which, notwithstanding the natural possibility of discovering many of the attributes of God by the light of true reason, did yet, in fact, overspread the world with polytheism or atheism ? ”
Clarke’s Evidences, p. 211.

“ That however infinite and various in his truth, ‘ the Lord our God is *one* God,’ consistent with himself, and uniform in operation, so that one part of his truth is every where introductory to and illustrative of another, is the solid foundation of that logical analogy from which the natural system of the universe is a key to the moral, by the use of which the divine philosopher is enabled to unlock the celestial mansions. A right knowledge of the dispensation of Nature, will, therefore, furnish us with a clue which will lead us to the right

knowledge of that of grace ; and by putting them side by side, in a comparative estimation, we shall see that the true method of interpreting the one, will introduce us to the true method of interpreting the other. Two books, or volumes of studies, says Bacon, are laid before us, if we would be secured from error. First, the Scriptures revealing the will of God, and the creatures expressing his power, whereof the latter is the key of the former.” *Tatham’s Chart and Scale*, vol. ii. p. 88. See also *Bonnet’s Philosophical Enquiries*, book 5. chap. 6. ; see the concluding observations of Dr. *Anderson’s Philosophy of Greece*. The uncertain notions of the ancients respecting the Divine Unity, are shown by *Whitby*, in his *Necessity of Revelation*, chap. 6.

No. 58.

Divine Attributes — the same as in Natural Theology.

See the attributes of the Divine Being set forth with great accuracy from the ancient writers by Bishop *Wilkins*, in his “*Natural Religion*,” chap. 8 — 11. “The account given us in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament of the nature, perfection, and providence of God, is agreeable to that which the light of nature discovers concerning them.” See *Dod-*

dridge's Lectures, part 7. prop. 125.; also *Gastrell's Institutes*, chap. 2.

“The Christian scheme represents Almighty God, in the twofold character of the wise and righteous Governor of the moral world, and of the tender and merciful Father of his creatures.” *Burgh's “Dignity of Human Nature,”* p. 354.

“Impressed upon every thing we observe in the natural system of the Universe, the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Deity meet the eye in such bold and prominent features, as to force themselves upon minds the most torpid and uninformed, &c. So obvious is the book of nature in its most useful pages to the plainest understandings. With equal clearness and simplicity, the fundamental truths of Christianity are revealed to all men,” &c. *Tatham's Chart and Scale*, vol. ii. p. 90.—“There is no verity about God, or the chief happiness of man, written in Nature, but it is to be found written in Scripture; so that the same thing may be the object both of knowledge and of faith.” *Baxter's Saint's Rest*, part 2. chap. 3.

No. 59.

New Views of the Deity to be expected.

“By reason is revealed the relation which God the Father stands in to us. Hence arises the obligation of the duty which we

are under to him. In Scripture are revealed the relations which the Son and the Holy Spirit stand in to us. Hence arise the obligations of duty which we are under to them, &c. How these relations are made known, whether by reason or revelation, makes no alteration in the case, because the duties arise out of the relations themselves, not out of the manner in which we are informed of them," &c. *Butler's Analogy*, part 2. chap. i.

" If we meet with so many insuperable difficulties in the search of Nature, much more may we in the contemplation of its Author; if the works of God do puzzle and baffle our understandings, much more may they confess their deficiency when God himself is the object." — See *Norris's Account of Faith and Reason*, p. 325.

See *Barrow's Sermons on the Creed*, vol. ii. Serm. 10., in which he explains the title of God as *Father*, Sermon 21. as the *Son*, Sermon 34. as the *Holy Spirit*. The title of *Father*, he says, is given from its *causality* — " the efficient cause or author of any thing is called its *father*," p. 108. " The Apostles, by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour, the which is that

generation whereupon our Lord is most truly and properly called, “*the only begotten Son of God.*” p. 238. “In common use of most languages, the name of *wind* or *spirit* doth serve to express those things which, from the subtlety of their nature, being indiscernible to us, are yet conceived to be moved with great swiftness. In like manner, the Holy Scriptures, with regard to our capacity and manner of conceiving, do, with the same appellation, adumbrate human souls, all the angelical natures, and the incomprehensible Deity itself. And to God this name is attributed, to signify his most simple nature, and his most powerful energy. To the *Father* is ascribed, that he freely deviseth what things should be done; to the *Son*, that he disposeth them in the most wise method towards their effecting; and to the *Holy Ghost*, that he, with powerful force, doth execute and effect them.” p. 359. See more upon this subject in Bishop Brown’s *Divine Analogy*, and in his *Procedure, Limits, and Extent of the Human Understanding*.

No. 60.

Describes the Deity analogically.

For accurate information on the subject of this section, I would beg leave to refer to the works of Bishop Brown, on the “*Procedure,*

Extent, and Limits of the Human Understanding," and on "*Divine Analogy.*" His ground of argument is this, that man " being made after the divine image," there must be a relation subsisting between our conceptions of things moral and spiritual and the attributes of God. Thus, when we assert of God that he is holy, just, and good, our conceptions of these attributes are first drawn from reflecting on these virtues as they exist in ourselves, and are then analogically applied to the Divine Nature. Thus, all our conceptions of things spiritual are in the nature of types of things in the heavens. The Scripture employs the same analogical language in the titles which it bestows upon God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; and the same remark applies to the various offices of Christ, as our Mediator, Redeemer, Advocate, &c. For various illustrations of this principle of analogy, as discoverable in the works of Providence, see *Paley's Natural Theology*, particularly chap. 15. See also *Felton's Vindication of the Christian Faith* : " We apply our abstracted notions of perfection, intellectual, natural, and moral, unto God ; but though they are abstracted, yet they are drawn from those first conceptions of wisdom, goodness, and power, which are formed originally from sensible ideas." p. 84. " We afterwards apply

these analogical principles to the peculiar articles of the Christian faith." p. 128—135. See some judicious remarks of Dr. *Ridley*, in his *Sermons on the Holy Spirit*, p. 5—11., concerning the application of this analogical reasoning to that doctrine of Scripture. "The whole analogy of nature," says *Hartley*, "leads us from the consideration of the infinite power and knowledge of God, and of his being the Creator of all things, to regard him as our Father, Protector, Governor, and Judge." *Observations on Man*, vol. ii. p. 17. See also *Tillotson's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 76. and 77.; also *Law's Notes to King's Origin of Evil*, chap. 3. Note C. p. 117. "It well deserves our notice," says Dr. *White*, "that while human understanding has been chiefly employed in investigating the *absolute* existence of God's attributes, Divine Revelation usually exhibits them in a *relative*, and, therefore, a more intelligible and more interesting point of view. He is our *Father*, by whom we are protected; he is our *Counsellor*, by whom we are instructed in the duties of our station; he is our *Judge*, by whom we shall hereafter be exalted to the noblest enjoyments, or condemned to the most dreadful torments. Do not these representations of the Deity pass more easily into the understanding, and work more forcibly on the af-

fections, than the profoundest researches of philosophy into the nature of infinity, or the most solid chain of arguments on the connection of cause and effect?" &c. *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon 9. part i. p. 419.

No. 61.

A Mediator.

"Perhaps it may appear strange, that this Lamb should have been slain for you; and you may be disposed to reject the promise of eternal life, because you cannot comprehend the reason which induced God to give it you through the hands of a Mediator; or because you may have some doubts respecting the nature and office of this Mediator. It is much to be lamented, that on this, the most important of all subjects, we reason worse than on any other. Would any of us refuse accepting the title-deeds of a great estate, because we knew not all the motives which induced the donor to send them by a particular messenger?" *Bishop Watson's Tracts*, vol. i. p. 414.

"It is evident that God makes us the daily ministers of good to one another, and chooses in this manner to govern the world, not immediately, but by the mediation of other intelli-

gent beings. The mediatorial scheme, therefore, has nothing absurd in it, but is most wise and reasonable ; and the person honoured with that commission is the most lovely pattern of all moral perfection.” *Benson’s Reasonableness of Christianity*, part 1. p. 22. Upon the mediatorial office of Christ, see Bishop Bradford’s *Sermons at Boyle’s Lectures*.

For some beautiful moral illustrations of the Christian doctrine of Mediation, I would beg leave to refer to Mr. Fuller’s “*Gospel its own Witness*,” part ii. ch. 3. That pardon is bestowed through a mediator in a vast variety of instances amongst men, cannot be denied ; and that it is proper it should be so, must be evident to every reflecting mind. All who are acquainted with the common affairs of life, must be aware of the necessity of such proceedings, and the good effects of them upon society, p. 178. He then shows that this method is both more humbling to the sinner, and more for the honour of the offended. “The offender who should object to a mediator would be justly considered as hardened in impenitence, and regardless of the honour of the offended,” p. 179. “A sinful man might have suffered for himself only, (though I see no reason to believe that his sufferings would have been sufficient even for himself,) but most assuredly he could have made

no atonement for the sins of another.” *Haller’s Letters to his Daughter*, p. 262. See *Mac-laine’s Third Letter to Jenyns*; see also *Magee on Atonement*, particularly vol. i. no. 9. p. 140.; also no. 18. p. 194.; also *Foster against Tindal*, p. 347—352.; also *Brown against Tindal*, p. 487—497.; also *Gale’s Court of the Gentiles*, vol. i. lib. ii. ch. 8.; *Leland’s View of the Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 36. p. 420. “It is reasonable that God should be displeased at the rebellion and transgression of his creatures; that he should show his disapprobation of iniquity; and so grant his pardon as at the same time to vindicate the honour of his government and of his laws. Now this he has accomplished in a more illustrious manner in the death of his Son, than by showing his hatred to sin, in keeping sinners at a distance, and refusing to hear them in their own name, and in bestowing his favours through the mediation of one who suffered for their offences, and rose again for their justification,” &c. *Jortin on the Christian Religion*, p. 43. ; also *Tillotson’s Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 17. 18. 19. ; also Dr. *Whichcote’s Discourses*, vol. 3. Serm. 5. 6. 7. ; *Leland’s Answer to Tindal*, vol. ii. ch. 15. ; *Scott’s Christian Life*, vol. 3. sect. 1. 2. and 13. ; also *Doddridge’s Lectures*, lect. 187.; *White’s Bamp. Lect.* Sermon ii. p. 61. Notes. Upon the opinions of Heathens

concerning the propriety of a Mediator, see *Bradford's Boyle's Lectures*; *Beattie's Evidences*, vol. ii. p. 53.; *Cudworth's System*, book i. ch. 4. p. 467. “I believe,” says Lord Bacon, “that God is so holy and pure, that it is impossible for him to be pleased in any creature; so that neither angel, man, nor world, could stand one moment in his eye, without beholding the same in the face of a Mediator.” — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 413.

No. 62.

Miraculous Incarnation.

It is objected that we cannot comprehend the manner in which the divine and human natures are united in the person of our Redeemer. But certainly this ought no more to be a prejudice against the belief of it, when it is revealed to us, and that revelation well attested by God, than the union of soul and body in ourselves, though we know not the manner of it, can hinder us from being fully convinced of the thing by its effects. But that this partaking of the human with the divine nature, render him a proper mediator and intercessor with God for man, cannot reasonably admit of any dispute.” *Leng's Sermons*, 16. p. 492, &c. See also *Tillotson's 45th and 46th Sermons*, vol. i. *Scott's Christian Life*, vol. v. discourse 2.; *Cumberland's Ob-*

server, no. 64. “ In several articles of revealed religion, we believe things of which we know not the manner or the reason. But is it then alone that we do so ? In the whole of God’s creation what do we meet with that is not more or less of the same sort ? We know not the essence of our own minds, nor the precise distinction of its several faculties ; why then should we hope to comprehend, or deny because we cannot comprehend, the personal characters which we are told exist in the Godhead ? We know not ‘ how the soul and flesh is in one man ; ’ what wonder then if we know not ‘ how God and man is one Christ ? ’ ” *Secker’s Sermons on Deut.* c. 29. v. 29. “ You see God in creation, why not in redemption ? In the former he condescends, according to our best philosophy, to manifest himself in the meanest reptile, all whose instinct he immediately prompts, and whose movement he directs and governs ; why then might he not manifest himself in man, though in another manner, and by an union with him still more close and intimate ? ” *Hurd’s Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 20. p. 336. ; also *Stillingfleet’s Origines Sacræ*, book iii. ch. 3. sect. 21. and 22. ; *Ogden’s Sermon on the Incarnation*. “ Some have made a difficulty of the Incarnation of Christ, as if there were in that doctrine somewhat peculiarly hard to admit, or next to absurd. But in such cases, where nothing is required to be

granted but what is analogous to the course of nature, it does not seem reasonable to hesitate at any supposed difficulty, which removed, would leave another confessedly as hard to surmount — how a spiritual being, of any rank whatever, comes to be immured in a material which is to us wholly inconceivable.” *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 369. See *Barrow’s Sermons on the Incarnation*, vol. ii. Serm. 23. and 24.; *Clarke’s Evidences*, p. 196—200.

[*For No. 63. see the end of the Notes, p. 526.*]

No. 64.

Originality of Christ’s Character.

For the developement of the argument contained in this section, I would beg leave to refer the reader to the eloquent Sermon of *Dr. White on the Character of Christ*. See his *Bampton Lectures*, Serm. 5. See *Duchal’s* first Sermon on the *Presumptive Evidence of Christianity*; *Clarke’s Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion*, 217.; *Taylor’s Life of Christ*, &c.; Bishop *Law’s Life of Christ*. See also some fine observations on this subject in *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, book iv. sect. 3. p. 404—419.; *Paley’s Evidences*, vol. ii. ch. 2. 4. and 5.; *Jenyn’s View of the Internal Evidence of Christianity*.

“ A Jewish peasant changed the religion of the world, and that without force, without power, without support, without one natural source or circumstance of attraction, influence, or success ; such a thing hath not happened in any other instance.” *Paley’s Evidences*, vol. ii. p. 376.

No. 65.

The Example of its Author.

The moral character of Christ is well illustrated by *Simpson* in his *Internal Evidences*, ch. 4. ; also by *Watson* in his *Popular Evidences*, ch. 8. “ No religion,” says *Barrow*, “ contains the like advantage of setting before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice, affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and virtue, so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the example of Jesus our Lord, as it is represented to us in the Gospels.” *Barrow*, vol. ii. Serm. 18. p. 194. See Bishop *Bradford’s Sermon at Boyle’s Lectures* ; *Tillotson*, vol. iii. Serm. 135. and 136.

N. B. It does not seem as if this argument had been sufficiently noticed, as a *test* and *criterion* of Revelation. Perhaps its practical importance has prevented many from considering its speculative value as an evidence of Christianity.

No. 66.

Sacrifice.

“ The whole world had a notion of the necessity of an expiation by sacrifice, and as they knew no rule by which to regulate their expiations but the nature of their sins, which might reasonably be supposed to require greater atonements according to their different degrees of guilt, so this begot not only a very costly worship, but also produced a savage practice of sacrificing men and women and children, imagining that the dignity of human nature, and the innocency of children, would be of so much the greater efficacy to their purpose. But since we are convinced of this barbarity and of the necessity of its abolition, it is a great instance of wisdom in this scheme of reconciliation, that it not only purges pardon in such a way as is agreeable to the notions of the world by a sacrifice of expiation for their sins, but also such a sacrifice as renders all others needless — this expiation being wrought by a person of such purity and dignity as to be sufficient for the sins of the whole world.” *Burnet’s Boyle’s Lectures.*

“ The laws of nature, as well as the economy of our redemption, point out to us, that though

no man can with justice be esteemed for what another agent does, yet one may be made more happy, or less miserable by the means of another." *Seed's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 366. See also *Tillotson*, 47th Sermon, vol. i. ; *Whichcot's Discourses*, vol. iii. Serm. 3. and 4. ; *Pearson on the Creed*, article 10. ; Bishop *Porteus's* 10th Sermon. Upon the opinions of the heathens respecting sacrifice and atonement, see *Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, ch. 24., and *Whitby on Revelation*, ch. 7.

We are disposed to take a middle road, as we have already hinted, (see Note No. 25.) between those who, like *Spencer*, trace the origin of sacrifices to the invention of heathen nations; and others who consider them as merely arbitrary appointments of God. Whilst we admit of their divine institution, we suppose this institution to have been made in concert with the principles of human nature; and under these limitations are disposed to admit of Bishop *Warburton's* reasonings, who connects the *eucharistic* sacrifice with our sentiments of gratitude, the *precatory* with our desire to implore success or to avert impending evils, and the *expiatory* with our confessions of deserving the same punishment which was thus inflicted on the victim offered. See *Divine Legation*, book ix. ch. 2. p. 136—159. He observes, that self-

love, aided by superstition, (should he not have said by *tradition?*) made men seek for the pardon of their own sins by the vicarious sufferings of others, p. 155. *

By this theory, we shall leave the original appointment to God, and yet connect the institution with the principles of the human mind; thus founding the doctrine, not upon an arbitrary exertion of divine power, but as given in correspondence to the condition and circumstances of mankind. See *Grotius de Jure*, lib. 2. ch. 21.; also *Leland against Morgan*, ch. 6. and ch. 16.; also some fine observations in *Johnson's Rambler*, No. 110.; *Seed's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 373.; *Potter's Antiquities*, book ii. ch. 4.; *Lord Herbert's Religion of the Gentiles*, ch. 15. p. 314.; *Felton's Vindication of Christianity*, p. 176, &c.; *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, p. 253. Above all, *Magee's* invaluable work on *Atonement*, the learning and research of which have nearly superseded the necessity of any other reference. Also Bishop *Watson's Tracts*, vol. i. Serm. 4., and Bishop *Stillingfleet's Discourse on Christ's Sufferings*.

* Archbishop *Secker* seems to have been of the same opinion, for speaking of human sacrifices, he observes, "this custom seems altogether the offspring, either of diabolical delusion, or of priestly tyranny, combined with gross ignorance and frantic terror, suggesting that the most precious and most painful sacrifices must be the most efficacious." See his Sermon on Heb., ch. xi. v. 17.; also *Grotius de Satisfact. Christi*, and *Macclaine against Jenyns, Postscript*, p. 266—272.

No. 67.

Spiritual Aid.

“ The doctrine of God’s readiness to assist men by his special grace in their endeavours after virtue, could be no more, at the best, than probable in the judgment of the heathens ; but we have in the Gospel the most express promises thereof for our infinitely great encouragement. *Tully*, in his book *de Natura Deorum*, says, that their city Rome, and Greece, had brought forth many singular men, of whom it is to be believed, none arrived to such a height ‘ nisi Deo juvante.’ He then cites similar passages from Pythagoras, Hierocles, and Seneca ; but none of these, he adds, could have assurance that God would not deny his special assistance to any that seriously seek after it, especially since men had brought themselves into the state of imbecillity through their own default,” &c. *Fowler’s Design of Christianity*, ch. 14. sect. 3., in which numerous coincidences may be found between revealed and natural theology. See *Law’s Notes on King’s Origin of Evil*, No. 71. ch. 5. sect. 5. p. 422—435. See also some passages of the ancients cited by *Jortin on Christian Religion*, p. 285. Note ; and in *Doddridge’s Lectures*, 175. and 178., where

many others are adduced which show how nearly the hopes of the heathens approached to the doctrines of the Gospel. See also *Tillotson*, vol. i. Serm. 47. vol. iii. Serm. 149.; also a fine discourse by Dr. *Tottie*, Serm. 7.; *Paley's* 14th, 23d, 24th, and 25th Sermons, particularly p. 379., in which he shows how nearly the doctrine of spiritual assistance is connected with the belief of a superintending providence. See also *Skelton's Deism Revealed*, dialogue 3. p. 169.; also Bishop *Horsley's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. 42.; Bishop *Taylor's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. 6. For various beautiful illustrations of this doctrine, as connected with natural religion, see *Price's Dissertations on Providence*, p. 12. and p. 54. and 93. That the wisest of the heathens owned their need of such assistance, is shown by *Clarke* in his *Evidences*, p. 153. and 178. See also *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. i. ch. 2.; also *Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things*, p. 217—238. and 282.; *Ogden's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 8. and 9. and p. 230., in which he shows that the imperceptible influence of the spirit corresponds to the invisible agency of providence. See also Bishop *Hickman's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 291.; *Tillotson's Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 300.; Bishop of *Lincoln's Refutation of Calvinism*, ch. 1. p. 65.; *Warburton's Divine Legation*, book ix. ch. 4. “ If a man of superior talents may have so great an influence over the actions of his fellow-crea-

tures, without taking away their liberty, it is surely reasonable to allow a much greater influence of the same kind to him who made us.” *Reid’s Essays*, vol. iii. Essay 4. ch. 5. p. 382. See *Whitby on the Five Points*, Discourse 6. ch. 2.

No. 68.

Sufferings of Christ.

“ It was a palpable notion amongst the most eminent pagan sages,” says Dr. Barrow, “ that no very exemplary virtue can well appear otherwise than in a notable misfortune. Thus Plato speaks of the character of a truly just man (as we have cited the passage). And it was, says *Seneca*, the cup of poison which made Socrates a great man, *Cicuta magnum fecit*, Epist. 13., and which out of prison did transfer him to Heaven, *calix venenatus qui Socratem transtulit e carcere in cælum*, Epist. 67. and 104. And the virtue and the innocence of Rutilius, he says, would have lain hid, if it had not by condemnation and exile received injury: while it was violated, it brightly shone forth, *Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, nisi accepisset injuriam: dum violatur, effulsit.*” — Epist. 79.

See a most beautiful application of the suffering example of the Founder of Christianity, to the circumstances of human life, in *Ogden’s*

Sermons on the Incarnation and Ascension. See also *Grotius de Veritate*, lib. 5. chap. 19. and lib. 4. chap. 12., in which he adduces the most eminent pagan philosophers asserting the argument of this chapter. See also *Sherlock's third Discourse*, vol. i. and *Discourse 10.* vol. 3. There are some ingenious observations on this subject in *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. prop. 39.; also *Tillotson's Sermons*, vol. ii. Sermons 12. and 13.; and also Serm. 64. and 138.

The advantages derived from the humble appearance of Jesus are stated by *Watson*, in his *Popular Evidences*, chap. 6. part 2. See also *Adam Smith's Moral Sentiments*, part 1. ch. 3.: “Upon that corruption which is occasioned by a disposition to admire the rich and the great, and to despise or neglect persons of poor and mean condition.” See also *Secker's Sermon on Romans*, chap. 14. v. 9.; also *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 25. and 26. “The Gentiles,” says *Jortin*, “ought not to have slighted and rejected the Gospel upon account of the low estate and sufferings of Christ and his Apostles. Their own reason, and some of their most approved writers, might have taught them not to value persons according to their greatness and riches, nor to measure the favour of God by temporal happiness, but to love and honour oppressed innocence,” &c. &c.; and he cites many remarkable passages from their writings.—

See his *Discourses on Christ. Religion*, p. 40—50. See many others adduced by *Tillotson*, vol. iii. Sermon 138. Quare quædam dura (boni) patiuntur? Ut alios pati doceant, nati sunt in exemplar. Vide *Senec. de Provident.* cap. 6.

No. 69.

Resurrection of the Body.

The argument of the resurrection of the body, as it relates to the immortality of the soul, is very forcibly stated by Bishop *Sherlock*, in his 6th Discourse of his first volume; also the 17th Discourse of vol. iii.; also by Abp. *Sharp*, vol. i. Serm. 12.; *Fowler's "Design of Christianity,"* chap. 14. sect. 3. *Scott's Christian Life*, vol. iii. sect. 14. See the analogies in favour of a Resurrection from the natural world, collected by *Watson*, in his *Popular Evidences*, p. 61—64., also p. 132—134.; see also Bishop *Horsley's* fine *Sermon before the Humane Society*, Sermon 39. vol. iii., also Sermon 43., wherein he states the connection of the Resurrection of the body with the doctrine of rewards and punishments. The same shown by *Tillotson*, vol. iii. Serm. 140.; *Secker on the Catechism*, lect. 16. 17.; *Chandler's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 9.; also the fine discourse of Bishop *Taylor*, vol. iii. Serm. 7. Dr. *Tottie* considers that the doctrine of the Resurrection of the

body was prevalent amongst the Jews, and that it had descended from the first Revelation.—See his 13th Sermon. See also *Paley's 35th Sermon*. The natural arguments for the Resurrection of the body are stated by *Doddridge*, in his 216th *Lecture*. See also *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. Sermon 30. and p. 378. See *Baxter's "Reasons for Christianity,"* for some curious moral arguments in favour of the Resurrection ; also *Cudworth's Intel. System*, vol. ii. p. 794. ; *Bates's Rural Philosophy*, p. 189. ; *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. ii. chap. 27. ; *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 204—207. ; also *Ogden's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 5. and 12. ; see *Burgh's "Dignity of Human Nature."* “ It must be owned, that the scheme of a restoration, or renovation, of the whole human nature, is incomparably more beautiful and regular, and, consequently, more likely to be true, than that received by the heathen world, which supposed the total loss or destruction of one essential part of nature, the body, and which made the future man a quite different being, — an unbodied spirit, instead of an embodied one.” — Book 4. sect. 3. p. 373. “ Abstractedly considered, i. e. without relation to the difference which habit, and merely habit, produces in our faculties and modes of apprehension, I do not see any thing more in the resurrection of a dead man, than in the con-

ception of a child, except it be this, that the one comes into the world with a system of prior consciousness about him, which the other does not," &c. "To the first man, the succession of the species would be as incomprehensible as the resurrection of the dead is to us."—*Paley's Evidences*, vol. ii. part 3. p. 392. *Pearson on the Creed*, article 11., in which every argument, whether scriptural or moral, is well arranged; *Grotius de Veritate*, lib. 2. c. 10. Fatoeior insitam esse nobis corporis nostri caritatem. *Senec.* Epist. 14. *Query*, Would not the doctrine of a resurrection have explained this instinctive affection?

No. 70.

Eternal Rewards and Punishments.

The punishments of the laws of nature are compared with those of Christianity by Bishop *Hurd*, in his 5th Sermon, vol. i. See also *Butler's Analogy*, chap. 2. part 1., in which there is a masterly review of the objections urged against Christianity, on account of its containing the doctrines of eternal punishments; see also *Foster's Discourses on Natural Religion*, vol. i. chap. 9.; also *Jenkin on the Reasonableness of Christianity*, vol. ii. chap. 14.; also *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 204. "That God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that

person whom he hath ordained, is a doctrine perfectly agreeable to right reason, and to our notions of the attributes of God, as may appear from the necessity and certainty of another life after this ; and it is evident from the opinions of the wiser Heathens concerning this matter. Nor may it, perhaps, be altogether impertinent to observe, that the poets, both Greek and Latin, have unanimously agreed in one particular circumstance, — that men after death should not have judgment passed on them immediately by God himself, but by just men appointed for that purpose.” See also p. 207—210. ; also *Ogden’s Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 7. and 13. ; also *Leland’s Advantages of Revelation*, vol. ii. part 3. chap. 9. ; also *Fuller’s “Gospel its own Witness,”* part 1. chap. 4. ; *Gray’s Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature*, chap. 27. ; *Gale’s Court of the Gentiles*, vol. i. lib. 3. chap. 7. ; *Leland’s View*, vol. ii. Letter 33. ; *Pearson on the Creed*, article 7., in which he shows how nearly the sentiments of the Heathens coincided with our own respecting a future judgment, p. 446. ; see also *Ritchie’s Doctrines of Revelation*, vol. i. chap. 2. sect. 2., and vol. ii. ch. 2, 3, and 4. ; also *Lord Herbert’s Relig. of the Gentiles*, ch. 15. p. 327. There are some excellent remarks on this subject in *Mr. Bowdler’s Select Pieces*, vol. ii. p. 116—130. ; also *Sherlock on Providence*, ch. 2.

No. 71.

Destruction of the World.

See *Doddridge's Lectures*, prop. 164. The same arguments which Maclaurin and other philosophers have generally applied to the past eternity of the world may also be used against its future eternal duration. "In general," he says, "all quantities, which must be supposed to decrease or increase continually, are repugnant to the eternity of the world; since the first had been exhausted, and the last had grown into an infinite magnitude at this time, if the world had been from eternity: and of both kinds, there seem to be several sorts of quantities in the universe." — See his *Account of Newton's Discoveries*, p. 395.; see also his chapter on Comets. See *Nicholls's First Conference with a Theist*: "As to the conflagration of the world, it was a doctrine of the highest antiquity. It was constantly maintained by the Stoicks; but they were not the authors of it. It was taught before them by Heraclitus, Empedocles, and others," &c. See *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, vol. i. ch. 1. p. 61. Note. See also *Hakewill's Apology*, lib. 4. chap. 13. sect. 2, 3, 4, and 5., in which he has collected numerous opinions of the ancient philosophers respecting the future destruction

of the world ; also *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, vol. i. book 3. chap. 7. The opinion that the world shall be destroyed by conflagration is shown by *Enfield*, in his *History of Philosophy*, to have obtained amongst the *Chaldeans*, vol. i. p. 37., the *Celts*, p. 96., the ancient *Etrurians*, p. 98., the *Stoicks*, p. 338—340., and the *Pythagoreans*, p. 412.

— Sic cùm compage solutâ
 Secula tot mundi suprema coëgerit hora,
 Antiquum repetens iterùm chaos, omnia mistis
 Sidera sideribus concurrent. *Lucan*, lib. 1. v. 73.

No. 72.

Mysteries of Christianity.

“ The doctrine that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, mysterious as it must ever appear to the eye of curiosity, opens to the ingenuous heart reflections of the highest importance: and who may take upon him to say, that so great a use was not even among the reasons of this awful dispensation ? The redemption of mankind by the death and suffering of the Son of God, is the greatest proof of Divine mercy, and, at the same time, to a noble, nay to any mind, the greatest discouragement to vice that it is possible to be conceived by man ; the strongest obligation that is in all nature to gratitude, the sublimest and most peaceable inducement to repentance.”

Ogden's Sermons, vol. i. p. 172. That the difficulties in natural and revealed religion are no excuse for infidelity, is shown at large in Mr. Gurdon's *Boyle's Lectures*. “ Though the mysteries of Christianity may transcend human reason, not one of them contradicts it. That there is a Mediator between God and man, cannot appear contrary to reason, or in any degree impossible, when we consider that all the good things we receive come to us by the intervention of various agents and instruments. That the Divine dispensation, with respect to the human race, should comprehend a long train of effects and causes, and a long succession of years, will not seem extraordinary to those who have observed, as every considerate person must have done, that the growth of plants and animals, and all other operations of nature, are gradual and progressive. The incarnation is not to us more unintelligible than the union of a human body with a human soul. To atone voluntarily for the sins of others, may be as possible to a superior being, and in him may be as consonant to equity, as, amongst inferior beings, for one man gratuitously to pay another’s debts. That the grace of God should exert itself in supporting, cherishing, and sanctifying the true believer, is as easily understood as any other exertion of Divine goodness; and that there should be a resurrection of the

body is suitable to many analogies of nature, and particularly to that alluded to by the Apostle, of a new and flourishing vegetable rising from a buried and corrupted grain of corn." *Beattie's Evidences*, part 2. p. 53—55. See a fine Sermon on the *Mysteries of the Christian Faith*, by Bishop *Stillingfleet*; also *Sumner's Records*, part 3. ch. 3.

No. 73.

Its Positive Institutions.

Lord Bolingbroke acknowledges of baptism and the Lord's supper, "that no institutions can be imagined more simple or more void of all those pompous rites and theatrical representations that abounded in the religious worship of the Heathens and the Jews, than these two were in their origin. They were not only innocent but profitable ceremonies, because they were extremely proper to keep up the spirit of true natural religion by keeping up that of Christianity, and to promote the observation of moral duties, by maintaining a respect for the revelation which confirmed them." See his *Works*, vol. iv. essay 4. sect. 7. and 39.

Bishop *Horsley* has treated this subject with great judgment in his two discourses on *the Sabbath*. See his *Sermons*, vol. 2. Having asserted the essential difference between primary

and positive duties, (the one being the end for which man was created, the other being made for man,) he thus asserts the excellence and propriety of these institutions which are peculiar to our religion. “ They are not mere arbitrary appointments of no meaning or signification, they are not useless exactions of wanton power contrived only to display the authority of the master, and to imbitter the subjection of the slave. They were made for man, they were appointed for the salutary influence which the Maker of man foresees they are likely to have upon his conduct,” p. 190, &c. See also *Foster on the Christian Revelation*, ch. 4.; also *Brown against Tindal*, p. 194—296., where this subject is treated with great acuteness. See also *Wollaston’s Religion of Nature*, p. 222. sect. 5.; also *Butler’s Analogy*, part ii. ch. 1.; *Price’s Dissertations*, p. 371. The evidence which is derived from positive institutions, is considered by *Watson* in his *Internal Evidences*, ch. 13. See also the third and fourth rules laid down by *Leslie* in his *Short Method with the Deists*. See also Bishop *Conybeare’s Defence of Revealed Religion*, p. 154—193.; also Bishop *Stillingfleet’s Irenicum*, ch. 3. and 4. The advantage of the positive institutions of Christianity is shown by *Whitby on Revelation*, p. 244., from contrasting their purity with the flagitious rites of Pagan superstition.

No. 74.

*Dependent on the Will of God ; our Enquiries
to be confined to Facts.*

“ If men should give themselves up to starting such questions about every thing in nature and religion, whether almighty power cannot alter every thing from what it is, and make it something else ; what jargon would they make of philosophy and divinity ? The true question is, not what almighty power can do, but what it hath done.” See *Brown’s Procedure, &c.* p. 167.

“ Of plain facts well attested, and of plain conclusions drawn from them, we are competent judges. But for creatures who have only a very imperfect acquaintance with a very small part of the world for a few years, to think of prescribing by what steps the all-wise God must conduct the affairs of it, and at what period he is bound to do any thing, and that if he does it at all ; is such amazing presumption, as no degree of ignorant boldness in deciding about the highest points of earthly knowledge make any approach to ; and were it carried on to its full length, it must end in downright atheism.” *Secker’s Sermon on Gal. ch. 4. v. 4.* “ With all our incapacity of judging beforehand what a

revelation ought to have been, it does not follow that we may not be sufficiently qualified to judge of its evidence and excellence, now it is delivered. And this is enough to determine us to what is right, and safe for us to pay to it all due regard." *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 333. See also *Seed's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. 2.

It is well observed by Dr. Magee, (vol. i. No. 17. notes,) that the Scriptures do not authoritatively pronounce on the *necessity* of that scheme of atonement which they contain; and that it does not become us to pronounce whether God could not have saved the world had he seen fit, by some other means than the death of Christ. So *Atterbury*, vol. iii. Serm. 3. p. 69. "Far be it from us to say, that infinite goodness and wisdom could have found out no other expedient. But since this and no other was made use of by God, we must needs think it was the most proper, and the best proportioned to those ends and purposes for which it was designed." Many important authorities connected with the subject of this chapter are to be found collected in the appendix to *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures*. See, above all, *Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth*, vol. ii., in which he investigates the nature of theological evidence with great acuteness, particularly ch. 2. sect. 2. p. 93—103. See also *Warburton's introduction*

to the ninth book of his *Divine Legation*; *Locke*, book 4. ch. 16. sect. 13, 14.

No. 75.

Its Evidences numerous and various.

“The whole evidence for Revelation is not prophecy alone, nor miracles alone, nor the sublimity of its doctrines alone, nor the purity of its precepts alone, nor the character of Moses and the Prophets, of Christ and his Apostles alone, nor the internal characters of simplicity in the writings of Scripture alone, nor any one of the other channels of proof alone; but the joint coincidence, and accumulated effect, of them all combined.” — *Burgh’s “Dignity of Human Nature,”* p. 376. The connection of the internal with the external evidences of Christianity is well pointed out by Bishop *Horsley*, in his 42d Sermon, vol. iii.; see *Clarke’s Evidences*, p. 215.; see *Watson’s Popular Evidences*, part 2. chap. 2. Upon the principles of miraculous and prophetic evidence, see *Tatham’s Chart and Scale*, vol. ii. chap. 2.: “As miracles formed a necessary supplement to the *moral* evidence, so the vast chain of *prophecy*, fulfilling and to be fulfilled, confirms the truth of *miracles*, in which they originated, and which they now supply, wonderfully co-operating with both, and uniting in one great design; forming

together a magnificent and stately system of evidence, equally to be admired for the symmetry of its distinct parts, and the harmony and disposition of the whole.” — P. 78.

The connection of the external with the internal evidences of Christianity is shown by *Bonnet*, in his *Philosophical Enquiries*, book 5. chap. 11.

Τριων γαρ αιτιων εσων, δι' ας ανθρωποι παραβαινουσι τας υποσχεσεις, και ψευδονιαι· η γαρ ευδυς εξαπαλων τις εφησεν, η φησας ισερον μελενοησεν, η βελομενος εξησθενησε. τουιων δε, το μεν εστι φαυλης αρροαιρεσεως, το δε ασθενης κρισεως, το δε ενδεις δυναμεως. παντα δε ὁ Θεος εκπεφευγε. τῳ φιλαγαθῷ, τῳ απατηλῷ ἢ βεβαιῷ, τῳ παλιναγρέλῳ ἢ τῳ τελεσιγράῳ, τῳ αἰελευτήλῳ. — *Stobæus*, Serm. 2. p. 139.

The connection of divine with human testimony is pointed out by *Hooker*, *Ecclesiastical Pol.* book 2. sect. 7.; in *Baxter's Saint's Rest*, part 2. ch. 3—8.; and *Locke*, book 4. ch. 16.

No. 76.

Best Assistant of Natural Religion.

“ Miracles not only contain a new demonstration of God’s existence, but strengthen the proofs it draws from the frame of the world, and clear them from the two principal objections of atheism, viz. either that the world is eternal, or that it owed its existence to the fortuitous concourse of atoms,” &c. — See

Farmer on Miracles, p. 546. “ Prophecy,” says Lord Bacon, “ is no other than a species of history ; divine history having this prerogative over human, that the narrative may precede as well as follow the events.” — *De Augment.* sect. 1. See also *Felton’s Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 403—409. ; *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. chap. 2. p. 126—136. ; *Leland against Morgan*, chap. 12. ; *Hurd’s 4th Sermon on Prophecy*, particularly p. 94. ; *Grew’s Cosmologia Sacra*, book 4. chap. 6. ; *Beattie’s Evidences*, vol. i. chap. 2. sect. 2. ; see Bishop Gibson’s *Second Pastoral Letter*. See some fine observations on the evidence of miracles and prophecy in *Tatham’s Chart and Scale*, vol. ii. chap. 2. ; *Conybeare’s Defence of Revealed Religion*, chap. 5—8. ; also in *Baxter’s Saint’s Rest*, part 2. ch. 4. ; *Pearson on the Creed*, article 1. p. 39. ; *Butler’s Analogy*, part 2. ch. 1. ; and *Leland’s View*, letter 2.

No. 77.

Christianity universal in its Design.

See *Gurdon’s Boyle’s Lectures*, Serm. 14. p. 418. ; *Watson’s Popular Evidences*, chap. 5. ; *Tillotson’s 190th Sermon*, where Christianity is shown to be a universal Revelation, 1st, from the person who published it ; 2dly, from its nature and design ; 3dly, from the prophecies concern-

ing it; 4thly, from the remarkable assistance given by God at its first publication, p. 559. That the efficacy of Christ's death may extend farther than the knowledge of it, see Bishop Bradford's last Sermon at Boyle's Lecture. "If we consider the nature of this Revelation, it will appear to be designed for the general use and benefit of mankind. The matters revealed, whether concerning God or ourselves, this world or the other, are of universal concernment. The laws of this Religion are not calculated for any particular place or nation, one more than another; and the arguments and encouragement to the obedience of these laws are equally fitted to work upon all capacities and conditions, and apt to affect them alike, because they equally touch the interests and concernment of all men, &c. There is nothing in the Christian Religion but what is fit for all men to know and practise, in order to their present peace and comfort, and their future and eternal happiness. These things are, surely, of universal and equal concernment to all mankind."

Tillotson ut supra. "Great and inestimably beneficial effects may accrue from the mission of Christ, and especially from his death, which do not belong to Christianity as a Revelation; i. e. they might have existed, and they might have been accomplished, though we had never

in this life been made acquainted with them. These effects may be very extensive : they may be interesting even to other orders of intelligent beings. I think it is a general opinion, and one to which I have long come, that the beneficial effects of Christ's death extend to the whole human species. It was the redemption of the *world*. ‘ He is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world,’ 1 John, ii. 2. Probably the future happiness, perhaps the future existence of the species, and more gracious terms of acceptance extended to *all*, might depend upon it, or be procured by it. Now these effects, whatever they may be, do not belong to Christianity as a *Revelation*, because they exist with respect to those to whom it is *not revealed*.” — *Paley's Evidences*, vol. ii. chap. 2. Note. Consult *Whitby on the Five Points*, Discourse 2., also Discourse 6. ch. 2.; *Leland's View of Deistical Writers*, letter 2.

No. 78.

Professes to be Universal.

For a most luminous exposition of the universal nature of the Christian dispensation, I would refer to the fine discourses of Dr. *Barrow*, vol. iii. Sermon 39—41.; also to Mr. *Fawcett's 7th Sermon*. See *Balguy's Second*

Letter to a Deist; also his *Moral Tracts*, p. 333.
 “ Though the redemption purchased by the Son of God is not, indeed, actually made known unto all men, yet as no man ever denied but that the benefits of the death of Christ extended backwards to those who lived *before* his appearance in the world ; so no man can prove, but that the same benefit may likewise extend itself forward to those who never heard of his appearance, though they lived *after* it.” — *Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 201. *Whitby on the Five Points.*

No. 79.

The Divisions of Christians.

“ If there be any thing in this way of arguing,” says *Leland*, “ it might be equally turned against Natural Religion, or even against the common principles of sense and reason, to show that nothing is to be depended upon, either in Religion or in any thing else,” &c. — See his answer to *Morgan’s Moral Philosophers*, ch. 16. p. 484. ; also his *Answer to Tindal*, vol. ii. ch. 10. The divisions of Christians are considered by Mr. *Watson* as affording evidence for the main truth of Christianity, in his *Popular Evidences*, chap. 12. part 2. p. 421—425. ; also Abp. *Secker’s Sermon*, on Matt. chap. x. v. 34. ; *Til-*

lotson's Sermons, vol. ii. Serm. 64. “ It is no objection to the doctrine of Christ, that all those who profess it are not saints. It would not be less absurd to object against philosophy, that all who profess it are not philosophers. But does it follow from this, that philosophy is not well calculated to make philosophers?” &c. *Bonnet's Philosophical Enquiries concerning Christianity*, p. 259. See *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. i. chap. 34. ; *Jenyns on the Internal Evidence*, p. 146—159. ; *Leland's Deistical View*, letters 1. and 14. ; see also vol. ii. p. 371.

No. 80.

Adapted to the Poor.

The great superiority of the Christian Revelation over an abstract Religion, as an instrument of instructing the poor, is shown by *Gurdon*, in his *Boyle's Lectures*, Serm. 13. p. 392. ; *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, vol. i. chap. 22, &c. “ In the Gentile world, whatever religious systems the sects of the philosophers had formed among themselves, they were never designed to be the religion of the people. Were they really in possession of any important truths relating to the nature and unity of the Divine Being, and to a future state, they were kept in the dark as

secret mysteries, which it was profaneness for the vulgar to approach, &c. The people had no other religion, but what was taught them by the poets, and modelled by the state, &c. &c. In this state of blindness and captivity, worthy it was of the Father of Mercies to send them a great deliverance, which could come from no other quarter. He sent his beloved Son to them with the glad tidings of salvation, which he faithfully delivered to them with condescension and delight; and was so far from being ashamed of his office, that he gloried in it, as the manifestation of God's paternal care for his distressed children, and of his own divine authority." — *Tottie's 10th Sermon*, p. 200. See also *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. ii. chap. 5. part 3.; *Bishop Hurd's Sermon on Matt.* chap. xi. v. 5.; *Whitby on the Necessity of Revelation*, p. 234.

No. 81.

Admitted by the Majority of the Learned.

I would beg leave to refer the reader to the large collection of authorities brought together by Dr. Ryan, in his "*History of the Effects of Religion*," chap. 3. sect. 7.; *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 99.; also *Lindley Murray's "Power of Religion exemplified by the Testimonies of Men of eminent Piety and Learning,"* &c.

“ Could those be weak men (the founders of Christianity) whom the most inquisitive and most enlightened minds that have been on earth since their time, whom Bacon and Grotius, whom Newton and Boyle, whom Hooker, Clarke, Butler and Stillingfleet, whom Milton, Clarendon, Addison, Arbuthnot, and Lyttelton, have held in the highest veneration, as not only wise but inspired? Either let the infidel admit that the publishers of Christianity were not weak men, or let him prove that the great persons now mentioned were destitute of understanding, or, at least in that respect, inferior to himself.” *Beattie’s Evidences*, vol. i. p. 156.

No. 82.

Its Progress gradual.

“ The time of our Saviour’s coming into the world is sometimes objected against, as if it had been too long delayed, supposing it ever to have been necessary, or even so highly beneficial to mankind as it is pretended: but this objection cannot be made by any one who does not assume to be as competent a judge of the fitness of the time as God Almighty; and it has been observed by some to be much like the atheist’s objections against God’s making the world — that if he

had made it at all, he would surely have made it sooner." *Leng's Sermons*, p. 493. See Bishop *Sherlock's* and Bishop *Hurd's Discourses on Prophecy*, wherein is shown the gradual advancement of Christianity. "Provehitur religio gradatim unà cum genere humano ad suam puritatem et perfectionem," &c. *Burnet, de Statu Mort.* The wisdom of this progressive increase of religious light is shown by *Leland* in his *Answer to Morgan*, ch. 3. p. 113. A sketch of its gradations, from Adam to Christ, is given by *Grew*, in his *Cosmologia Sacra*, book 4. ch. 7. See also *Secker's Sermon on Gal.* ch. 6. v. 15.; *Jortin*, vol. 7.; also *Watts's "Harmony of Divine Religions;" Doddridge's 109th Lecture;* *Skelton's Deism Revealed*, dialogue 7.; and Bishop *Law's Theory of Religion*.

"Christianity is one of the diversified means by which the human character is exercised; and they who require of Christianity that the revelation of it should be universal, may possibly be found to require that one species of probation should be adopted, if not to the exclusion of others, at least to the narrowing of that variety which the wisdom of the Deity has appointed to this part of his moral economy." *Paley's Natural Theology*, p. 530. "In all the dispensations of Providence, benefits are distributed in a si-

milar manner : health and strength, sense and science, wealth and power, are all bestowed on individuals and communities, in different degrees, and at different times," &c. — *Jenyns's Internal Evidence*, p. 172.

No. 83.

Its Existence permanent.

There are some fine reflections on the subject of this chapter in Mr. *Cumberland's Observer*, no. 61.; also in *Watson's Popular Evidences*, p. 402—411. See also *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. p. 187—195; *Leland against Tindal*, vol. ii. ch. 6. The influence of learning on Revelation is forcibly illustrated by Bishop *Warburton*, vol. ii. Sermon 15.; in which he traces its connection with the principles of human knowledge. That Christianity is the preserver of literature, see *Jortin's 1st Charge*, vol. vii. "We should remember," says Lord Bacon, "the prophecy of Daniel concerning the latter ages of the world — ' Many shall run to and fro upon the earth, and knowledge shall be increased ;' thereby plainly intimating it to be the design of Providence, that when the world was laid open to general intercourse, as by our numerous and long voyages it now begins to be, at the same

time also the sciences should receive increase.”
Nov. Org. sect. 6.

Connected with the argument of this chapter, and yet possessing all the force of an independent presumptive evidence in favour of Christianity, is the following observation of Dr. Paley :— “ From the widely disproportioned effects which attend the preaching of modern missionaries, compared with what followed the ministry of Christ and his Apostles, under circumstances either alike, or not so unlike as to account for the difference, a conclusion is fairly drawn in support of what our histories deliver us concerning them ; viz. that they possessed means of conviction which we have not ; that they had proofs to appeal to which we want.” *Evidences*, part 2. ch. 9. sect. 2. ; also *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. ii. part 3. chap. ii. ; also two excellent discourses of Bishop *Hurd*, on Matt. xvi. v. 18. ; and *Baxter’s Saint’s Rest*, part 2. ch. 6., where this subject is treated with great ability.

No. 84.

The great Medium of Civilization.

Upon the connection of Christianity with the promise of the life that now is, see the first chapter of Dr. *Ireland’s Paganism and Christianity*.

ianity compared. Also *Paley's Evidences*, vol. ii. ch. 7. part 3. There are two fine discourses of Bishop *Stillingfleet* on the *Advantage of Christianity*, as the way to happiness, Serm. 10. and 11. vol. iv.; also Bishop *Sherlock*, Serm. 4. vol. i.; *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. ch. 2. prop. 36. ; *Til-lotson*, Serm. 5. vol. i. The social influence of Christianity is displayed by *Leland* in his *Answer to Tindal*, vol. ii. p. 473—477. ; and the same argument is detailed by Dr. *Ryan*, in his *History of the Effects of Religion*, particularly chap. 3. The claims of infidelity and religion, as to their effects on human happiness, are also contrasted by Mr. *Watson* in his *Popular Evidences*, part i. ch. 2. and 3. ; also as friendly to useful knowledge, part 2. ch. 12. “ Wherever the Gospel has been sent, the improvement has kept pace with the purity in which it has been held. There have been many dark ages in the Christian world; but this is no contradiction; on the contrary, it confirms and illustrates this principle. For in those ages, men were only called Christians: they were totally ignorant, not only of the spirit, but even of the letter of the Gospel. But as soon as a spirit of religious enquiry broke forth, as soon as the New Testament was put into the hands of the people, at that very time a flood of light poured in upon man,” &c. p. 429—435. See

also an admirable discourse by Bishop *Horsley*, vol. iii. Serm. 40.; also *Secker on Matt.* ch. x. v. 34. The effects of Christianity on the manners of nations are described in the *Encyc. Britannica*, article *Religion*, No. 48. See also Mr. *Fawcett's* fifth Sermon on the *Effects of Christianity*.; also *Doddridge's Lectures*, vol. i. part 5. prop. 96. See the progress and decline of Christianity connected with that of human knowledge, by *Beattie* in his *Evidences*, vol. ii. ch. 3. p. 35. and p. 120—139. See an account of various improvements introduced by Christianity into the manners of nations in *Jortin on Christian Religion*, p. 144—155.; also Bishop *Porteus*, on the *Beneficial Effects of Christianity on the Temporal Concerns of Mankind*. Even Mr. Gibbon admits the truth of this representation. “Christianity,” he says, “which opened the gates of heaven to the barbarians, introduced an important change in their moral and political condition.” — *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 275.

No. 85.

Contradictions of its Opponents.

Upon the general characters, arts, talents, and studies of infidel philosophers, I would beg leave to refer to the second chapter of Mr.

Watson's Popular Evidences of Christianity; also to *Fuller on Deism*, part i. ch. 3.; and to *Clarke's Evidences*, prop. 15. For a view of the impieties and practical ill effects of infidel philosophy, see the Abbé *Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism*, and Professor *Robinson's Proofs of a Conspiracy*. I beg to mention, however, that these works are referred to only as furnishing illustrations of the argument contained in this chapter, and as by no means pledging myself to the admission of *all* their reasonings. See also Dr. *Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures*, vol. i.; Bishop *Gibson's first Pastoral Letter*, p. 9.

“ Whenever we hear a man questioning the truth of our religion, before we pay any attention to his argumentation, let us ask ourselves this question, Would it not be for this man's interest that Christianity should be false? The answer to that question will in general instruct us in what light we should consider his objection,” &c. Bishop *Watson's Miscellaneous Tracts*, vol. i. p. 569.

“ I cannot help observing,” says a late pious and elegant writer, “ that those bolder geniuses, who of late years have rejected Christianity as a dispensation unworthy of the wisdom and equity of God, have, by no means, done credit to their own *more rational and simple* schème of religion, by sublimer descriptions of the charac-

ter of the Almighty, or by the expression of profounder reverence towards Him. Mr. *Hume's* language, in those parts of his Essays where he touches on the attributes of God, is very highly presumptuous, and his private correspondence was profane. *Voltaire*, a sincere theist, in one of his lighter works, speaks of the moral government of the Deity in terms of the most insolent and offensive levity ; and so little tendency had his speculations to produce an increased veneration towards the Author of all things, that neither his reproaches nor his authority were sufficient to prevent some of the most illustrious of his pupils from pushing his principles to the direct disavowal of a first cause. Both *Diderot* and *Condorcet* were atheists. The former, in one of his letters, says “ Ce pauvre Voltaire radote un peu. Il avouait l'autre jour qu'il croyait à l'être de Dieu.” *D'Alembert* laboured pretty generally under the same imputation ; but *La Harpe* says in his letters, that he had frequently heard him say, “ que la probabilité était pour le Théisme.”—La Probabilité ! See *Bowdler's Select Pieces*, vol. ii. p. 200. ; also *Fuller on Deism*, part 1. ch. 2.

No. 86.

The only Credible Revelation.

The subject of this section forms Dr. Clarke's eighth proposition in his *Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 167. See the effects of Mahometanism contrasted with those of Christianity, by Dr. White in his *Bampton Lect.*; and by Ryan in his *History of the Effects of Religion*, ch. 4. See also Paley's *Evidences*, part ii. ch. 9. sect. iii. The impiety and imposture of Paganism and Mahometanism, are finely shown by Dr. Barrow, vol. ii. Serm. 14.; also by Porteus in his *Evidences*, prop. 8.; also by Jenkin on Christianity, vol. ii. ch. 6—9. part 3.; Grotius *de Veritate*, lib. 4—6.: yet Chubb, in his hatred of Christianity, could affect to compliment the religion of Mahomet! See his *Posthumous Works*, vol. ii. p. 40.

No. 87.

Depends on the free Mercy of God.

“ It is manifest that the whole scheme of Christianity tends to inspire us with the most profound thoughts of God's infinite majesty, greatness, and purity, and at the same time to

impress and affect our hearts with the most humbling sense of our own meanness, guilt, and unworthiness. It tends not to inspire us with pride, but with gratitude for these undeserved favours and benefits ; and at the same time that it fills us with the highest admiration at the Divine condescension and goodness towards us, it teaches us to sink into the very dust before his glorious Majesty, acknowledging that we are less than the least of all his mercies, and giving him the whole glory of our salvation.” *Leland’s View of the Deistical Writers*, vol. ii. letter 37. 234.

“ Considering that we have received our being, and all that we are and have from God, and upon these accounts are obliged to love and serve him to the utmost, what senseless arrogance is it to say that a creature can merit any thing at God’s hand ? Whatever we give God is of his own, and when we have done all we can, we have done no more than our duty. And can any man challenge any reward for doing what he ought to do ? Can any man make satisfaction for a fault that he has committed by doing his duty, i. e. by not committing another ?” *Tillotson*, Sermon 174. vol. 3. That pride is the chief root of infidelity, is shown by *Barrow*, in his first Sermon, vol. ii. p. 5—7. “ The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing human conceit, and to the

exclusion of all glorying in ourselves, referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty, and grace. It represents all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves. Such notions proud hearts cannot digest," &c. Upon the pride of the ancient philosophers, see *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, book 4. part 2. particularly ch. 2—5., in which he shows how this principle acted upon the Cynics, Stoicks, Sceptics, and Epicureans. See *Hurd's Sermons*, on 2 Cor. iv. 3., and on Matt. xi. 29.

Yet on mature consideration, I think that we are fully justified in using more decided language than that which has been adopted in the text respecting the accordance of natural and revealed theology, upon the subject of human merit: for, besides the universality of prayers and sacrifices in the heathen world, from which we have deduced this approximation, we might also have appealed to their confessions respecting the imperfections even of the best amongst mankind. Thus when Horace asserts "Vitiis nemo sine nascitur," he adopts a sentiment which approaches to the declaration of Scripture, "that all have sinned," and "that in many things we all offend." But we have

still more decisive evidence for this opinion: we meet with these expressions in Terence, *Adelph.* *Act 4. Scene 3.* v. 1.: “Ego in hac re nihil reperio, quamobrem lauder tantopere Hegio,—meum officium facio.” Now if sentiments like these could occur in their social and domestic intercourse, is it not plain that they would apply them in a far higher sense to their relations towards God? So again we read in the life of Antoninus Pius, by Capitolinus, “Impius sit magis qui ista non faciat, quàm pius qui debitum reddat,” sect. 2. But the language of Ovid is far more explicit:

Quamvis est igitur meritis indebita nostris,
Magna tamen spes est in bonitate Dei.

De Pont. lib. i. Epist. 6. v. 45.

It should be remembered, however, that these were only occasional emotions, sufficient indeed to point out the connection of this doctrine with the suggestions of the human mind, but which were not generally received by the ancients amongst their principles of moral science. Yet the expressions of Seneca are very memorable; for they almost coincide with the doctrine of our Church respecting original sin: Quid lenioribus verbis *Ulcus publicum abscondo?* Omnes mali sumus. Quicquid itaque in alio repre-

henditur, id unusquisque in suo sinu inveniet.
De Irā, lib. 3. c. 26.

No. 88.

Improvement of Natural Religion.

“ How short the heathen systems come of the perfection of a true and complete morality, is very visible ; and since that, if the Christian philosophers have much outdone them, yet we may observe that the first knowledge of the truths they have added is owing to revelation, though as soon as they are heard and considered, they are found to be agreeable to reason, and such as can by no means be contradicted,” &c. *Locke’s Reasonableness of Christianity*, in Bishop *Watson’s Theological Tracts*, vol. iv. p. 95. See this exemplified in the case of *Wollaston*, in *Ireland’s “Paganism and Christianity compared,”* p. 317. ; also by *Ellis*, in his “*Knowledge of Divine Things,*” p. 49—51. See *Warburton’s Divine Legation*, book 9. ch. 1., who justly concludes that, though reason can *approve* of truth when it is discovered, it is not able to *find it out*, without assistance. See also *Felton’s Vindication of the Christian Faith*, p. 124., in which he demonstrates, with great force of argument, that whether unbelievers own their

obligation or not, they must now be influenced in their moral opinions by the light of Christianity. See also *Van Mildert's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 43. and p. 71. "They suppose them to be the deductions of reason, because they are in all respects so congenial with our hopes and wishes, and are so strongly attested by every thing which passes under our contemplation in the natural and moral world, that they cannot be relinquished without doing violence to the feelings, and to the understanding." See also *Leng's Sermons*, p. 371—377.; also Bishop *Watson's Address to Deists*, at the close of his *Letters to Gibbon*; and Bishop *Sherlock's first and fourth Discourses*, vol. i. The assistance given by Revelation to the study of morals is shown by Grove in his "*Moral Philosophy*," vol. ii. c. 20. "How comes it to pass that our systems are more regular, and our deductions of virtue clearer? Whence are those sublime duties, and actions, and principles, more solid and better established than appear among the ancients? Are we wiser than Socrates or Cicero? is our capacity of mind greater, our study more severe, or our knowledge more universal and extensive?" &c. *Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things*, p. 50. See also Bishop *Conybeare's Defence of Revealed Religion*, ch. 6, 7, and 8., particularly p. 236; also *Jenkin on Christianity*, vol. ii. part 2. ch. 18.;

Sumner's Records of the Creation, vol. i. p. 209—215. ; and *Whitby on Revelation*, ch. 7. and 8.; *Leland's View*, letters 2. 5.10. and 31.

No. 89.

Eulogium of its Adversaries.

See some acknowledgements of the ancient enemies of Christianity to the virtues of the Christians, collected by *Baxter*, in his “*Reasons for Christianity*,” p. 359—365. See also several confessions of the value of Miracles, from eminent unbelievers, collected by *Leland*, in his *Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*, vol. i. p. 10. and p. 19. Note; see others in *Ryan's History of Religion*, chap. 6. ; also by *Tillotson*, Serm. 65. vol. ii. There are many others to be found scattered in *Leland's View of Deistical Writers*.

No. 90.

The Political Circumstances of the Jews.

See *Sykes's Connection of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 195. “ The Jews have continued upwards of seventeen hundred years a distinct people, though scattered up and down amongst

every nation of the earth. Their religion, their food, their customs, and their features, are all distinct from the various people amongst whom they live. And what marks this in a more strong and wonderful manner, is, that they have no country, no fixed settlement, no government ; but, on the contrary, have, for the greater part of this period, been the objects of hatred and persecution amongst the nations where they reside, &c. How is it to be accounted for, that amidst so much scorn and persecution, they have never been compelled to mix and incorporate themselves with other people ? Upon what principles can we account for all this ? May we regard them as now atoning for the offences of their fathers, in rejecting and crucifying the Messiah ? &c. Without calling in the aid of some such principle, this phenomenon in the history of mankind seems an inexplicable mystery ; and the dispersion and misery entailed on this infatuated people is altogether a mystery.”

Watson’s Popular Evidences, p. 398—402. See *Hurd on Prophecy*, p. 172—187. ; *Spectator*, No. 495. ; and *Beattie’s Evidences*, vol. i. part 2. sect. 2. p. 123. ; *Tillotson’s 186th Sermon*, vol. iii. ; *Basnage’s History of the Jews* ; and *Bossuet’s Universal History*, part 2.

No. 91.

Superiority of its Moral Incentives.

Upon the subject of this section, the reader may consult with advantage the following authorities : — Bishop *Fowler's Design of Christianity*, republished in the 6th volume of Bishop *Watson's Theological Tracts*, particularly ch. 7. and ch. 15. ; also Abp. *Sharp's Sermon* 7. vol. ii. ; *Hartley on Man*, vol. ii. chap. 2. prop. 35. ; Bishop *Horsley's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. 42. ; *Tillotson's Sermon* 5. vol. i. and Serm. 189. vol. iii. ; *Secker's Sermon on Romans*, chap. 14. v. 9. ; *Chandler's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 3. vol. ii. Serm. 22. ; *Hurd's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. 13. ; *Balguy's First Letter to a Deist*, in his *Moral Tracts*, p. 13—22. ; *Barrow*, vol. ii. Serm. 16. ; *Clarke's Evidences*, p. 211. ; see also *Paley's Evidences*, chap. 2. vol. ii. ; also (with some caution) *Jenyns's View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion* ; *Magee on Atonement*, vol. i. no. 45. *Notes*. *Price's Review of Morals*, chap. 10. p. 440. *Note*. See the excellence of Christian motives, as connected with the death of Christ, well illustrated by Dr. *Ritchie on Revelation*, part 4. sect. 3. vol. ii., and by *Whitby on the Necessity of Revelation*, p. 204—218.

No. 92.

Christ Divine, or Christianity Idolatrous.

“ The author of our Religion must either have been truly and indeed what he declares himself — the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, and his Religion a divine appointment, or he must have been an enthusiast, or a madman, and his Religion either a secular scheme, an involuntary delusion, or a pious fraud,” &c.— *Burgh’s Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 404, &c.; also *Leland’s View*, vol. ii. Letter 31. There are some fine observations, in unison with the argument which is here advanced, to be found in *White’s Notes to his Bampton Lectures* :—

“ Is it probable that the whole Church should have formed a wrong idea, not only of a few circumstantial points, but of matters of the highest consequence, through every period in which we are capable of tracing the history of its opinions ? &c. This seems to be an argument *a priori* against that species of Christianity, which some, under the pretence of refining it from corruption, would reduce to the level of natural religion.” — P. 61—69. See *Van Mildert’s Boyle’s Lectures*, vol. i. 207—224.

The great tendency of mankind to bestow Divine honours on their benefactors is pointed

out with much learning by *Farmer*, in his treatise on “*The Prevalence of the Worship of Human Spirits in the Heathen Nations.*” See also *Whitby on Revelation*, p. 186—195., and *Abp. Tennison on Idolatry*, ch. 14., who considers the *Shechinah*, under the old covenant, and the Incarnation of the second person of the Trinity, under the Christian dispensation, as the appointed cure for idolatrous worship ; which appointment at once explains, corrects, and satisfies this tendency of the human mind. *Query*—Do not some expressions of Scripture seem to countenance this theory? Thus, Christ is termed εικων των Θεων, 2 Cor. iv. 4.; Col. i. 15.; Heb. x. 1. απαυγασμα της δοξης και χαρακηρ της υποστασεως. *Heb.* i. 3.

No. 93.

Final Cause of the Creation.

For a fine commentary on the hints which are in this section, I would beg leave to refer to the Discourses of Dr. *Chalmers on the Christian Revelation, as viewed in Connection with Modern Astronomy*, particularly to his fourth, fifth, and sixth Discourses. See also *Fuller's “Gospel its own Witness,”* part 2. ch. 5., in which the consistency of the Christian Redemption is shown, with the modern opinions of

the magnitude of creation ; also p. 220. upon the possible influence of Christianity upon remote departments of the universe ; see also Mr. Nares's *Treatise on the Plurality of Worlds*, and the countenance which this opinion receives from the language of the inspired writers ; also Beattie's *Evidences*, part 2. chap. 3. sect. 7. On the general propriety of arguing upon final causes, see Boyle's *Disquisition on Final Causes*, and also some fine observations of Mr. Stewart, in his second volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, p. 478—498 ; see also Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, p. 676, &c. ; Leng's *Sermons*, p. 262. “The Scripture alone gives an account of the original causes of things, the true springs of events, and declares the end from the beginning ; which shows it to be given by him who saw through all futurity, and by the same who has been from the beginning at the head of the affairs of the world, who governs the world, and, therefore, knew how to give an account (so far as to his wisdom seemed fit to discover) of the whole current and course of events, from the creation to the consummation.” — Burgh's *Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 341. Conybeare's *Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. 1. Lord Bacon speaking of the Mediatorial scheme, describes it “as the great mystery and perfect centre of all God's

ways with his creatures, to which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer.”
Works, vol. iv. p. 414.

[Omitted in its proper Place.]

No. 63.

The Mediatorial Character of Christ.

“ That a world which is visibly fallen into wickedness and misery should have a Redeemer, Saviour, and Mediator towards God ; that he should be one who is sufficiently near unto God and unto man, and have the nature of both ; that he should be the second Adam, the root of the redeemed ; that God should give all mercy from himself, from his own bounty and fulness, and that therefore the Redeemer should not be an angel or intermediate person, but God himself ; that guilty souls should have such evidence of God’s reconciliation to encourage them, and to come to him with joy and boldness in their addresses, having a Mediator to trust in, and his sacrifice, merits, and acceptable name to plead before God ; that Satan, and the world,

and death, should thus be conquered in a suffering way, and man have a perfect pattern to imitate, of self-denial and humility, and exact obedience and resignation to the will of God ; that the world should be under such an universal Administrator, and the Church be all united under such a head ; that this Mediator should be one of our own nature, who hath risen from the dead, and should be in possession of the glory to which we are going, and thence should send down his spirit to sanctify us, and fit us for Heaven, and should afterwards be our Judge, and receive us into eternal blessedness :— all this is no less than the image and the wonderful effects of the wisdom of God.” *Baxter’s Reasons of the Christian Religion*, part 2. ch. 6. p. 268—270. See also *Archbishop Tillotson’s 164th Sermon*, vol. iii. ; *Doddridge’s Lectures*, prop. 144. “ Every one of the arguments of all other intercessions is applicable here, with a force infinitely greater. So much our own little reason may teach us, that his prayer must be the most prevalent who is the most exalted in dignity and goodness, and dearest to the Father of all mercies.” See *Ogden’s fine Sermons on Prayer and Intercession*, Sermon 9. p. 98. ; *Bossuet’s Universal History*, part 2.; *Butler’s Analogy*, part 2. ch. 5.

APPENDIX.

ALTHOUGH in the preceding notes there are frequent references to the ancient authors, yet I have thought that it would be at once interesting and satisfactory to see these authorities drawn out in a more regular manner. For this purpose I have selected some of the most striking passages which illustrate and confirm the general argument; arranging them, as much as possible, according to the order of the sections. It would have been easy to have multiplied these illustrations to an almost indefinite extent; but these are perhaps more than sufficient to serve as a confirmation of the reasoning which has been employed in this work. “Facile est docere pene universam veritatem per philosophorum sectas esse divisam, nullamque sectam fuisse tam deviam, nec philosophorum quenquam tam inanem, qui non viderit aliquid ex vero.” *Lactant. lib. vi. sect. 7. p. 621. edit. Sparke.*

No. 1.

The Possibility and Want of Revelation.

Gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem atque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, et a quibusdam intelligi prædicique posse censeat. Atque hæc, ut ego arbitror, veteres, magis eventis moniti, quam ratione docti, probaverunt.
Cic. de Divin. lib. i. c. 1. et 3.

Divinatio, unde oriatur, non intelligo. *De Nat. Deor. lib. iii. c. 6.*

Nihil est quod Deus efficere non potest, et quidem sine labore. *Idem, de Divin.*

Quæ Phœbo Pater Omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
 Prædictus. *Virg.*

Δειν γαρ περι αὐτὰ εν γε τι τοιτῶν διαπράξασθαι, η μαθειν οπη εχει, η ευφειγ· η ει ταῦτα αἰδυνατον, τον γαν βελιστον των ανθρωπινων λογων λαθοντα και δισεξελεγκτοτατον, επι τττες οχουμενον, ασπερ επι σχεδιας, κινδυνευοντα διαπλευσαι τον βιον· ει μη τις δυνατο ασφαλεστερον και ακινδυνοτερον επι βεβαιοτερες οχηματος, η λογις θεις τινος, διαπορευθηναι. *Plato, Phæd. vol. i. p. 85. Edit. Serrani.*

Οι γε αρχαιοι το παρα των θεων επρεσβευον μαλλον και εσεμνυνον· και δια τττο ὁ χρηστηριαζομενος ην τοτε πολυς. *Strabo, lib. xvi.*

Το μεν αληθες, ω ξεγε, δισχυριζεσθαι ταῦτα εἶως εχειν,
πολλων αμφισβητενων, Θεε εστι. *Plato de Leg. lib. i.*
Τουτο δη το μερος φαμεν φυσει κυριωτατον, και δυνατον οιον τε
μαλιστα και αριστα μαθειν, ει διδασκοι τις· αλλ' οδ' αν διδαξειεν,
ει μη Θεος υφηγοιο. *Idem in Epinomide.* Είτα τον
λοιπον χρονον καθευδοντες διατελοιτε αυ, ει μη τινα αλλον υμιν
ο Θεος επιπεμψειη, κηδομενος υμων. *Idem, Apolog. So-*
crat. Εν γαρ χρη ειδεναι, ο τι περ αν σωθη τε και γενηται
οιον δει, εν τοιαυτη καταστασει πολιτειων, Θεε μοιραν αυτο σωσαι.
Idem, de Repub. lib. vi.

Ουδεν εκφυγει το Θειον· τουτο γινωσκειν σε δει.

Αυτος εστι αμων εποπτης· αδυνατει δονδεν Θεω.

Epicharmus.

Ουκ ειναι τα μεν δυνατα τω Θεω, τα δε αδυνατα, ωσπερ
οιεσθαι της σοφιζομενας, αλλα παντα δυνατα.

Pythag. apud Iamblicum.

Θεος συνεργων παντα ποιει ραδια.

Ουδεν δε χωρις δαιμονος σθενει βροτος.

Menander.

Δια ταῦτα δε ο Θεος, εξαιρυμενος τηλων νουν, ιτιοις (ποιηταις)
χρηται υπηρεταις, και τοις χρησιμωδοις, και τοις μαγιστροις τοις
θειοις· ινα ημεις οι ακουουτες ειδωμεν οι ουχ ουτοι εισιν οι ιαντα
λεγοντες, ειω πολλα αξια, οις νους μη παρεστιν, αλλ' ο θεος
αυτος εστιν ο λεγων. *Platonis Ion. vol. i. p. 534. edit.*
Serrani. Περι των τοιων νομοθετεισθαι βεβαιως, θαροεντα
μελη τα την ορθοτητα φυσει παρεχομενα· τυτο δε, θεε η θεια
τινος αν ειη. *Idem, de Leg. lib. ii. vol. ii. p. 657.*
Του μεν ποιητην και πατερα τηδε τη παντος, ευρειν τε εργον,
και ευροντα, εις παντας αδυνατον λεγειν. *Idem, Timaeus.*

Esse divinum quiddam, quod dæmonion (Socrates) appellat, cui semper ipse paruerit, numquam impellenti, sæpe revocanti. *Cic. de Divin. lib. i. c. 54.*

No. 2.

The Creation of the World, &c.

Quis non hinc æstimet mundum quandoque cœpisse, nec longam retro ejus ætatem, cum ab hinc ultra duo retro annorum millia de excellenti rerum gestarum memoriâ ne Græca quidem extet Historia? *Macrob. in Som. Scip. lib. ii. c. 10. p. 108. Edit. Gronov.*

Si nulla fuit genitalis origo
Terraï et Cœli, semperque æterna fuere,
Cur superà bellum Thebanum et funera Trojæ,
Non alias alii quoque res cecinere Poëtæ?

Lucret. lib. v. v. 325.

Quod et præterita teneat et futura provideat et complecti possit præsentia, hæc Divina sunt. Nec invenietur unquam, unde ad hominem venire possint, nisi a Deo. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i.*

Εἰς ταῖς αληθειαισιν, εἰς εστίν Θεος,
Ος ερανον τ' ετευξέ καὶ γαῖαν μακραν,
Πούλε τε χαροπον οἰδμα, κάνεμων βιαν.

Sophoc. Frag.

Ἐν τοστῷ δὴ πολεμῷ καὶ στάσει καὶ διαφωνᾷ, εναὶ ἰδοις αὐτοῖς πασῇ γῇ ομοφωνού νομον καὶ λογον, οτι Θεος εἰς πανταν
βασιλευς καὶ πάτηρ, καὶ θεοι πολλοι, θεες παιδες, συναρχοντες
θεω. Ταῦτα ὁ Ελλην λεγει, καὶ ὁ βαρβαρος λεγει, καὶ ὁ
ηπειρωτης, καὶ θαλατηιος, καὶ ὁ σοφος καὶ ὁ ασοφος. *Max.*
Tyr. Disp. i. p. 6. Edit. Davis.

Αρχαιος μεν ουν τις λογος καὶ πάτηρ εστι πασιν ανθρωποις,
ως εκ θεων τα παντα, καὶ δια θεων ημιν συνεστηκεν· υδεμια δε
φυσις, αυτη καθ' εαυτην αυταρκης, ερημωθεισα της εκ τελε
σωληριας. *Aristot. de Cœlo. vol. i. c. 6. p. 610.*
Edit. Du Val.

De nihilo quicquam fieri, nulli physico placet.
Cic. de Fato. c. 8.

No. 3.

Man originally Innocent, &c.

Vetustissimi mortalium nullâ adhuc malâ libidine,
sine probro, scelere, eoque sine pœnâ aut
coercitionibus agebant. *Tacit. Annal. lib. iii.*

Vetus illa ætas, cui fecimus Aurea nomen,
Fœtibus arboreis et quas humus educat herbis,
Fortunata fuit; nec polluit ora cruento, &c.

Ovid. Metam. lib. xv. v. 95.

Sese mortali ostendere cœtu
Cœlicolæ, nondum spretâ pietate solebant.

Catul. de Nup. Pel. et Thet.
Et Deus humanâ lustro sub imagine terras.

Ovid.

Το παλαιον παντ' ην αλφιτων και αλευρων πληρη, καθαπερ
και νυν κονεως· και κρηναι δέρρεον, αι μεν υδατος, γαλακτος
δ' αλλαι· και ομοιως αι μεν μελιτος, αι δόινυ, τινες δ' ελαιις· απο
πλησμοσυνης δ' οι ανδρωποι και τρυφης, εις υβριν εξεπεσον.
Ζευς δε μισησας την καλαστασιν, ηφανισε παντα, και δια πονω
τον θιου απεδειξε. *Strabo, lib. xv.*

Ω ποποι, οιον δη νυ θεας βροτοι απιοωνται.

Εξ ημεων γαρ φασι κακ' εμμεναι· οι δε και αυτοι

Σφησιν ατασθαλιησιν υπερ μορον αλγε' εχγασιν.

Hom. Odyss. i. v. 32.

Τας παλαιες και εγγυς θεων φησι γεγονοιας, βελτιστας τε
οντας φυσει και τον αριστον εξηκολας θιου, ως χρυσων γενος
νομιζεσθαι παραβαλλομενης προς θις νυν, κιβδηλος και φαυλο-
ταλης υπαρχοντας υλης, μηδεν φουνευειν εμψυχον. *Porphyr. de
Abstin. lib. iv. p. 142. Edit. Cantab. 1655.*

Aurea prima sata est ætas, quæ, vindice nullo,
Sponte suâ sine lege fidem rectumque colebat.

Ovid. Met. lib. i. v. 90.

No. 4.

The sinful Condition of Man, &c.

Multis signis Natura declarat quid velit — ob-
surdescimus tamen nescio quo modo, nec au-
diemus. *Cic. de Amicit.*

Quod si talis nos Natura genuisset, ut eam ip-
sam intueri et prospicere, eademque optimâ duce
cursum vitæ conficere possemus, haud erat sane

quod quisquam rationem et doctrinam requireret. Nunc parvulos nobis dedit igniculos quos celeriter malis moribus opinionibusque depravati sic restinguimus, ut nusquam naturæ lumen appareat. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* lib. iii. sect. 1.

Nam si consensu omnium Philosophorum, sapientem nemo assequitur, in summis malis omnes sumus, quibus vos optime consultum a Diis immortalibus dicitis. Nam ut nihil interest utrum nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere; sic non intelligo, quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* lib. iii.

Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur; optimus ille est
Qui minimis urgetur. *Hor.*

Quis non timeat omnia providentem et cogitantem et animadvententem et omnia ad se pertinere putantem, curiosum et plenum negotii Deum? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* lib. 1.

Ωσπερ γαρ και τα των νυκτεριδων ομματα προς το φεγγος εχει το μεθ' ημεραν, ετω και της ημετερας ψυχης ο νες προς τα τη φυσει φανερωλατα πανιων. Aristot. *Metaphys.* lib. ii. c. 1. vol. ii. p. 856. Edit. *Du Val.*

O miseras hominum mentes, O pectora cæca,
Qualibus in tenebris vitae, quantisque periclis
Degitur hoc ævi, quodcunque est!

Lucret. lib. ii. v. 14.

Τέλο εστί το αἴτιον τοις ανθρωποις παντῶν των κακῶν, το τας προληψεις τας κοινας μη δυνασθαι εφαρμοζειν τοις επι. μερες.
Epict. lib. iv. c. 1. p. 538. Edit. Upton.

Εδοξε δη, και νυν ετι δοκει, τα μεν αλλα επιληδευματα παντα
ου σφοδρα χαλεπα ειναι· το δε τινα τροπον χρη γιγνεσθαι
χρηστες ανθρωπος, παγχαλεπον. *Plato in Epinomide.*

Και μανθανω μεν οια δραμ μελλω κακα·

Θυμος δε κρειστων των εμων θελευματων.

Eurip. Medea.

— Video meliora proboque,

Deteriora sequor.

Ovid.

Αμαρτιανει τι και σοφες σοφωτερος.

Aeschyl. apud Stobaeum.

Γενεσθαι μεν ανδρα αγαθον χαλεπον αληθεως· οιον τε μεντος
επι γε χρονον θνητον γενομενον δε, διαφενειν εν θαυμη τη εξει, και
ειναι ανδρα αγαθον, αδυνατον, και ωκ ανθρωπειον. —

Αυταρ ανηρ αγαθος, τοτε μεν κακος, αλλοτε δεσπλος.
Plat. Protag. vol. i. p. 344. Edit. Serrani.

Flens animal ceteris imperaturum, et a suppliciis vitam auspicatur, unam tantum ob culpam,
quia natum est. *Plin. lib. vii. c. 1.*

No. 5.

On Sacrifice and Atonement.

Beneficium superveniens injuriam apparere
non patitur. *Senec. de Benefic.*

Sic *Aeschylum*, narrat *Aelianus*, a poenâ liberatum,
quia frater ipsius Amyntas pro patriâ for-

titer fecisset. Sic apud Romanos, Tito Quin-
tio accusato, profuit patris Cincinnati memoria.
Livius de Appio. “ Majorum merita in Rem-
publicam commemorabat, quo pœnam depre-
caretur.” Plautio,” inquit *Tacitus*, “ mors re-
mittetur ob patrui egregium meritum.” Et in
universum *Sallustius* “ si deliqueret vetus nobilitas,
majorum facta fortia præsidio adsunt.” *Cicero* :
“ Oportebit eum qui sibi ut ignoscatur postu-
labit, majorum suorum beneficia, si qua exta-
bunt, proferre.” *Quintilianus* : “ Periclitantem
commendant merita majorum.” *Grot. de Satis-
fact. ch. 6.*

Nec vero me fugit quam sit acerbum paren-
tum scelera filiorum pœnis lui ; sed hoc præ-
clare legibus comparatum est, &c. *Cic. Epist.
ad Brut. 12.*

Tu autem etiam Deciorum devotionibus pla-
catos Deos esse censes. Quæ fuit eorum tanta
iniquitas, ut placari Populo Romano non possent,
nisi viri tales occidissent ? *Id. de Nat. Deor.
lib. iii. c. 6.*

Zaleucus, urbe Locrensum a se saluberrimis
atque utilissimis legibus munitâ, cum filius ejus
adulterii crimine damnatus, secundum jus ab
ipso constitutum, utroque oculo carere deberet,
ac tota civitas in honorem patris pœnæ necessi-
tatem adolescentulo remitteret, aliquamdiu re-
pugnavit. Ad ultimum, precibus populi evic-

tus, suo prius, deinde filii oculo eruto, usum
videndi utriusque reliquit. Ita debitum supplicii
modum legi reddidit, æquitatis admirabili tem-
peramento, se inter misericordem patrem et
justum legislatorem partitus. *Val. Max.* lib. vi.
c. 5.

Pro vitâ hominum nisi vita hominis reddatur,
non posse Deorum immortalium numen placari
arbitrantur. *Cæsar*, de Gallis, lib. vi. c. 16.

Men' piacularem oportet fieri ob stultitiam
tuam;

Ut meum tergum stultiæ tuæ subdas succi-
daneum? *Plaut. Epidic.* act. i. scen. 2. v. 36.

Ut cædes manifesta aliquo piaculo lueretur,
imperatum est patri, ut filium expiaret. *Liv.*

Vetus priscis temporibus opinio obtinuit, februa
esse omnia, quibus malefactorum conscientiæ pur-
garentur, delerenturque peccata. *Plin.*

Homines, ut victimas immolabant et impuberes
aris admovebant, pacem Deorum sanguine eorum
exposcentes. *Justin.* lib. 18.

Plebeiæ Deciorum animæ plebeia fuerunt
Nomina: pro totis legionibus hi tamen, et pro
Omnibus auxiliis, atque omni plebe Latinâ,
Sufficient Dîs infernis, Terræque parenti.
Pluris enim Decii, quam qui servantur ab illis.

Juv. Sat. viii. v. 254.

Παντες γαρ εν τητω αμολογησαν οι θεολογοι, ας γιε απλευ
εν ταις απατροπαιοις θυσιαις των θυομεγων καθαρσιοις το

χρησίεν, μη γαρ ιοι. τις εις αστήν, μη δ' εις οικον ιδίον, μη προτερον εσθῆτα και σωμα πολαρμοις η πηγη αποκαθηρας, φασιν.
Porphyr. de Abstin. lib. ii. p. 87. Edit. Cantab. 1655.

Αυτικ' εγω πρωτος κελομην Θεου ιλασκεσθαι.

Hom. Il. i. v. 386.

Ενθαδε μιν ταυροισι και αρνειοις ιλαονται.

Hom. Il. ii. v. 550.

Τιμωμεν δε της Θεες, η κακων μεν απόροπην, αγαδων δε παρασκευην ημιν γινεσθαι ζητινης, η προπεπονθοτες ευ, η ινα τυχωμεν αφελειας τινος, η καλα την ψιλην της αγαδης αυλων εξεως εκτιμησιν· ωστε και των ζωων ει απαρκτεον αυλα θεοις τητων τινος εγκα θυλεον· και γαρ α θυομεν, τητων τινος εγκα θυομεν. *Porphyr. de Abstinent.*

Καθαρματα ελεγοντο, οι επι καθαρσει λοιμω τινος, η τινος ετερας νοση θυομενοι τοις Θεοις. *Schol. ad Aristoph. Plut.* p. 24. Edit. Kusteri.

Ουλως επελεγον τω καλ' ενιαυον συνεχοντι των κακων. Περιψημα ημων γενυ, ητοι σωτηρια και απολυτρωσις, και ενεβαλον τη θαλασση ωσανει τω Ποσειδωνι θυσιαν αποινυνησ. *Suidas in voce περιψημα.*

Apud Herodotum, lib. 1. Phryx Adrastus homicidio pollutus καθαρσις εδεετο — Crœsus ipsum εκαθηρε· similem dicit esse καθαρσιν apud Lydos et Græcos: Persuasissimum habebant gentes delictis hominum offendit et irasci Deos. Iram tamen hanc sperabant averti posse quibusdam victimis. His dicebatur placari numen, reus ipse, aut homo, aut populus purgari, sive februari, pec-

catum ipsum piari et lustrari. Queis omnibus in unum collectis, videbimus haud immerito de his sacris Plinium exclamâsse, “ adeo ista toto mundo consensere, quanquam discordi et sibi ignoto.” *Grot. de Satisfact. Christ.* cap. 10. Omni autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex Naturæ putanda est. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* lib. i. c. 13.

No. 6.

Divine Assistance.

Nemo unquam vir magnus sine aliquo Divino afflatus fuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* lib. ii.

Est Deus in nobis, sunt et commercia Cœli,
Sedibus æthereis Spiritus, ille venit. *Ovid.*

Τῷ δὲ αὐτὸν γνῷ καὶ Θεός συλλαμβάνει.

Æschyl. Persæ.

Αλλ' οταν σπευδη τις αὐτος, χωρὶς Θεος συναπίεται.

Idem.

Οσον επι λοις Θεοις, καὶ ταις εκεινεν διαδοσεσι καὶ συλληψεσι καὶ επινοιαις, μηδεν κωλευει ηδη καὶ φυσιν ζην με, η απολειπεσθαι εἰ τετε παρα την εμην αἴιαν, καὶ παρα το μη διαληρειν τας εκ λων Θεων υπομνησεις, καὶ μονονχι διδασκαλιας. *Anton. lib. i. c. 17.*

An potest aliquis supra fortunam, nisi a Deo adjutus, exsurgere? ille dat consilia magnifica et erecta. In unoquoque virorum bonorum,

(quis Deus incertum est,) habitat Deus. *Senec.*
Epist. 41.

Αι δε αρισται ψυχης φυσεις, αμφισθητησιμοι εν μελριω
 της ακρας αρετης προς την εσχατην μοχθηριαν καθωρισμεναι,
 δεονται ξυναγωνιστε Θεε και ξυλληπτορος της επι θαλερα τα
 κρειτιω ροπης και χειραγωγιας. *Max. Tyr. Dissert. 22.*

Φοβεται τις ανηρ αγαδος, μη λιπωσιν αυτω τροφαι; Τοις
 τυφλοις & λειπουσι, τοις χωλοις ου λειπεσι λειψουσιν ανδρι
 αγαδω; *Epictet. lib. iii. c. 26. p. 525. Edit. Upton.*

Οταν τι πραττεις οσιον, αγαθην ελπιδα
 Προβαλλε σαντῳ, τῳ γινωσκειν οτι
 Τολμη δικαια και Θεος συλλαμβανει.

Menand. p. 190. Edit. Clerici.

Δει μεν παν και το μικροιαλον ουλω ποιειν· εις γαρ αυθωπιγον
 τι αγεν της επι τα θεια συγαφορας ευ πραξεις. *Anton.*
lib. iii. sect. 13.

No. 7.

Repentance and Hope, &c.

Referamur illuc, unde non decuit prius
 Abire; vel nunc casta repetatur fides.
 Nam sera nunquam est ad bonos mores via,
 Quem pœnitent peccasse, penè est innocens.

Senec. Agamem. v. 240.

Sævi quoque implacabilesque Domini crude-
 litatem suam impediunt, quando pœnitentia
 fugitivos reduxit, et dedititiis hostibus parcimus.
Petronii Satyr.

Μονη γαρ εμοι γε δοκει τασις αμαρτίας ομολογειν τε αμαρτιαγούλα, και δηλον ειναι επ' αυτω μελαγιγγωσκούλα.
Arrian. de Gest. Alex. lib. 7.

Λογος—ορθως γιγγοιο ημιν, προαγορευων εξιστασθαι πασι τοις ασεβεσι τροπων των αινων εις τας ευσεβεις. *Plato de Leg. lib. 10.*

Τον λοιπον θιον καλασθρεφει εν πασῃ κακοδαιμονιᾳ· εαν δὲ Μελαγοια αινω απο θιης τυχης συνανηση, ειδα εξαιρει αινου εκ θιων κακων, και σωζεται, και μακαριος και ευδαιμων γιγνεται.
Cebes. p. 19. Edit. Foulis.

Το γαρ τοις αμαρτημασι συγαλγειν την οικειαν αισθησιν, ευρασθαι τι τοις υπαρχοσι κακοις ακος ζητειλων βιων· ινα καδαπερ αγνα θυματα τω Δαιμονιω των ανθρωπων εκαστος απαρχομενος, τυχη της οστας και παρα Θεων αφελειας.
Porphyr. de Abstin. lib. ii. p. 76.

Πασα δὲ της ανθρωπινης ψυχης τελειοτης, εις την προς Θεον επιστροφην, και την προς αινου συνταξιν υποκορυφεται.

Simplic. in Arrian. c. 79. p. 296. Edit. Lond.
 1670.

Οι γαρ Θεον σεβοντες ελπιδας καλας
 Εχεσιν εις σωτηριαν.

Philemon, p. 364. Edit. Clerici.

Τι καλλιστον τα βια τελος; το μιμεισθαι τας θεες. *Julian.*

No. 8.

Prayers and Worship, &c.

Bene ac sapienter Majores instituerunt, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a preca-

tionibus capere ; quod nihil rite, nihilque providenter homines, sine Deorum Immortalium ope, consilio, honore, auspicarentur. *Plin. in Panegyrico*, cap 1.

Ne in victimis quidem, licet optimæ sint auroque præfulgeant, Deorum est honos, sed piâ ac rectâ voluntate venerantium. *Seneca*.

Cultus autem Deorum est optimus, idemque castissimus atque sanctissimus, plenissimusque pietatis, ut eos semper purâ, integrâ, incorruptâ et mente et voce veneremur. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. ii.*

Compositum jus, fasque animi, sanctosque recessus

Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto :
Hæc cedo, ut admoveam templis et farre litabo.

Persius, Sat. ii. v. 73.

Θεῷ δε θυε δια τελες δικαιος ὡν,

Μη λαμπρος ὡν ταῖς χλαμυσιν, ὡς τῇ καρδίᾳ.

Menander.

Πεμψον μεν φως ψυχαῖς ανερων,
Ταῖς βελομεναις αθλες προμαθειν
Ποδεν εβλαστον, τις ρίζα κακων,
Τινι δει μακαρων ευ θυγατρεντος,
Ευρειν μοχθων αγαπαυλαν.

Eurip. apud Cudworth.

Μαλλον το Δαιμονιον προς το των θυογλων ηθος, η προς το των θυομενων πληθος βλεπει.

Porphyr. de Abstin. lib. ii. p. 62.

Primus Deorum cultus est reddere illis majestatem suam, reddere bonitatem. *Seneca.*

No. 9.

Immortality of the Soul.

O præclarum diem quum in illud animorum concilium cœtumque proficiscar, et quum ex hac turbâ et colluvione discedam! *Cic. de Senectute.*

Cum de animorum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum, aut inferos timentium, aut colentium.
Seneca.

Nescio quomodo, dum lego, assentior, cum posui librum et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cœpi cogitare, assentio omnis illa elabitur. *Cic. Tus. Quæst. lib. i.*

Quod autem corpus animæ per se? quæ materia? ubi cogitatio illi? quomodo visus? auditus? aut quî tangit? qui usus ejus? aut quod sine his bonum? *Plin. lib. 7.*

Neque aliud est quidquam cur incredibilis animarum videatur æternitas, nisi quod nequeunt qualis sit animus vacans corpore intelligere et cogitatione comprehendere. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i.*

Ἐμοι μὲν αποδανομενῷ, υμῖν βιωσομενοῖς· οποῖεροι δε ημῶν ερχονται επι αμειγον πραγμα αδηλον παντι, πλην η τω Θεω.

Plato, Apolog. Socrat.

Οὐκ εστιν αὐδρι αγαθῷ κακον οὐδεν, εἰς ζωὴν εἰς τελευτὴν· εδε αμελεῖται υπο θεων τα τελε πραγματα.

Idem, vol. i. p. 41. Edit. Serrani.

Επιοντος αρα θάνατος επι τον ανθρωπον, το μεν θνητον αυτον αποδυησκει· το δε αθανατον, σων και αδιαφθορον οιχειται απιουν, ιπεκχωρησαν τω θανατῳ. *Idem, Phæd. p. 106.*

Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium. *Cic.*

No. 10.

Eternal Punishments and Rewards.

Sedet æternumque sedebit,
Infelix Phlegyas.

Virg.

Fieri permagna accessio potest si aliquid æternum et infinitum malum impendere nobis opinemur. *Cic. de Fin. lib. i. c. 17.*

Οι δ αν δοξωσιν αγιαλως εχειν δια τα μεγεθη των αμαρτηματων,—τετες ή προσηκεσα μοιρα ριπτει εις τον Ταρταρον, οθεν εποιε εκβαινεσι. *Plat. Phæd. vol. i. p. 113.*

Ταῦτα τοινυν εδεν εστι πληθει εδε μεγεθει προς εκεινα α τελευτησαντα εκατερον περιμενει. *Idem, de Repub. lib. x.*

Χρη παντα ποιειν, ωστε αρετης και φρονησεως εν ιω βιω μειασχειν καλον γαρ το αθλον, και η ελπις μεγαλη. *Idem.*

Ωσπερ συ κολαστεισ αιωνιτις νομιζεισ, εἰς και οι τουν ιερων

εκεινων εξηγηται, τελεσται τε και μυσταγωγοι. *Celsus apud Origen, lib. viii. p. 408. Edit. Spencer.*

Ταυτης της δικης, ότι συ μηπολε, ότι ει αλλος ατυχης γενομενος επευξηται περιγενεσθαι θεων. *Plato de Leg. lib. x. p. 905.*

Certum est in cœlo et definitum esse locum ubi beati ævo sempiterno fruantur. — Nunc tanto præmio proposito, enitar multò vigilantiùs. Som. Scip. apud Cic. n. 3 et 8.

Πολλων γαρ αδικηματων γεμοντα την ψυχην εις αδε αφικεσθαι, παντων εσχατον κακων εστιν. *Plato, Gorgias, vol. i. p. 522. Edit. Serrani.*

Πως εκ αιτιαρον αιωνιων αγαθων ελπιδα στέρεισθαι, και την ακροτατην ευδαιμονιαν αποβαλειν; *Plutarch.*

Ου βελεται γαρ ο κακος αδικων ειναι την αυτη ψυχην, ηα μη υπομεινη τιμωρημενος. *Hierocles.*

No. 11.

The World a State of Trial and Probation.

Quid mirum, si durè generosos spiritus Deus tentat? Nunquam virtutis molle documentum est. Verberat nos et lacerat fortuna? Patiamur, non est sævitia, certamen est, quo sæpius aderimus, fortiores erimus. *Seneca, de Prov. c. iv.*

Hic est ille homo honestus, qui sive toto corpore tormenta patienda sunt, sive flamma ore recipienda est, sive extendere per patibulum

manus, non quærit quid patiatur, sed quam bene.
Idem.

Et ferrum et ignis saepe medicinæ loco est.

Seneca, Agamemnon.

Dura aliquis præcepta vocet mea ; dura fatemur
 Esse : sed ut valeas, multa dolenda feres.

Sæpe bibi succos, quamvis invitus, amaros
 Æger ; et oranti mensa negata mihi.

Ut corpus redimas, ferrum patieris et ignes,
 Arida nec sitiens ora levabis aquâ.

Ut valeas animo, quicquam tolerare negabis ?

At pretium pars hæc corpore majus habet. *Ovid.*

Πολλὰ γνὺ καὶ εὐ εκείνοις εστὶ τραχεῖα, ἀλλὰ ασπαζόμενα
 τὴν ἐλπίδι τῆς οὐγείας τοιετού τι σοι δοκεῖται, ανυστὶ καὶ
 συντελεῖα των ἵη κοινῇ φυσει δοκεύουσι, οιου η ση οὐγεία. *An-*
toninus, lib. v. c. viii. p. 37. *Edit. Gataker.*

Μεγας ὁ αγων εστι, θειον το εργον τα Θεα μεμυησο-
 εκεινον επικαλε βοηθον καὶ παραστατην, ως τας Διοσκορους εν
 χειμωνι οι πλεονεις. *Epictet.* lib. ii. c. xviii. p. 281.
Edit. Upton.

Νυν εστὶ ὁ αγων, καὶ ηδη παρεστὶ τα Ολυμπια. *Enchirid.*
 c. 75.

No. 12.

On God, his Nature, and Attributes.

Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque na-
 turam, et eam suspiciendam admirandamque ho-

minum generi, pulchritudo mundi ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri. *Cic. de Divin.* lib. ii.

Deus — omnes in se perfectiones habet. *Idem, de Orat.* lib. ii. Parent Dei numini omnia. *Idem, de Divin.* Mens divina, mens pura et sincera, mens soluta et libera, segregata ab omni concretione mortali. *Idem, Tusc. Quæst.* lib. i.

Necesse est ei eadem placere, cui nisi optima placere non possunt: nec ob hoc minus liber ac potens est, ipse enim est necessitas sua. *Senec. Nat. Quæst.*

Deum esse animum per naturam rerum omnium intentum et commeantem. *Pythag. apud Cic. de Nat. Deor.* lib. i. c. xi.

Nos Deum nisi sempiternum intelligere quî possumus? *Idem.*

Nihil Deo clausum, interest animis nostris, et mediis cogitationibus intervenit. *Seneca.*

Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videtis occurrentem tibi, nihil ab illo vacat, opus suum ipse implet. *Idem, de Benefic.* lib. 4.

Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum.

Horat.

Hominum Sator atque Deorum.

Virgil.

Μάθειν δει πρωτον τέλο, οἵ εστι Θεος, καὶ προνοεῖ τῶν ολῶν καὶ οὐκ ἐī λαθεῖν αὐτὸν, ε μογον ποιεύτα, αλλ' εδε διανοεμενον, η ευηγμενον. *Epictet. lib. ii. c. xiv.*

Θεος οδαμη οδαμως αδικος, αλλ' ως οιον τε δικαιολαος.
Plato, Theæt. Ουδεποτε οδαμη οδαμως αλλοιωσιν οδεμιαν
 ενδεχεται. *Idem, Phæd.* Το κρειτιον. ὁ Δημιουργος.
 ὁ Ποιητης και Πατηρ τοδε παντος. ὁ επι πασι θεος. της φυσεως
 Κλισης. τη πανιος Αρχη. πανιων αιτιον. νας πανιων βασιλευει.
 νας αυτοκρατωρ. πανια κοσμων. δια πανιων ιων. τη πανιος
 κυβερνητης. ὁ πρωιος θεος. ὁ μεγιστος Δαιμων. ὁ μεγιστος θεων.
 ὁ ηλιον γεννησας. ὁ γην, υρανον και θεας, και πανια τα εν υρανῳ
 και τα εν αδῃ, και υπο γης απαντα εργαζεται. αυτοφυης, ὁ πανιων
 βασιλευει, περι ον πανια εστι, σ ενεκα πανια, και το αιτιον
 πανιων των καλων, &c. *Idem, apud Cudworth,* p. 406.

Πανια εχει τ' αγαδα ὁ θεος, και εστιν αυταρκης. *Aristot.*
 Κυδιστη αδανατων, πολυωνυμε, παγκρατες αιει,
Zeus, φυσεως αρχηγε, νομος μεια παντα κυβερνων, &c.

Cleanthes.

Ο μεγας θεος. ὁ ανωτατω θεος. ὁ πρωιος θεος. ὁ αγεννηλος
 θεος. οσα μη παρ' ημιν εστιν, ευχομεθα του θεου διδοναι.
Plutarch. apud Cudworth, p. 443.

Ζευς πρωιος γενελο, Ζευς υσταλος, αρχικεραυνος.
 Ζευς κεφαλη, Ζευς μεσσα. Διος δε εκ πανια τελυκιαι.
 Ζευς αρσην γενελο, Ζευς αμβρολος επλειο νυμφη.
 Ζευς πυθμην γαιης τε και υρανω αστεροενιος.
 Ζευς πνοιη πανιων. Ζευς ακαματι πυρος ορμη.
 Ζευς ποιη ριζα. Ζευς ηλιος ηδε σεληνη.
 Ζευς βασιλευει. Ζευς αρχος απανιων αρχιγενεθλος.
 Εν κρατος, εις Δαιμων γενελο, μεγας αρχος απαντων.

Aristot. de Mundo, cap. vii. p. 615. Edit.

Du Val. et ap. Cudworth, p. 301.

Τον οὐλα παντῶν Κυρίου γενικωΐαλον,
Καὶ πάλερα, τελον διατελεῖ τιμῆν μονού,
Αγαθῶν τοιείων ευρέην καὶ κλιστόρα.

Menander, p. 48. Edit. Clerici.

Οι τε γαρ αλλοι (θεοι) ημιν τα αγαθα διδοντες, ωδεν τελων
εις τέμφανες ιοντες διδοσσιν, και ὁ τον ολον κοσμον συνιατίων
τε και συνεχών, εν ω παντα καλα και αγαθα εστι, και αει
μεν χρωμενοις απρίβη τε, και υγια, και αυγηράλον παρεχων,
Φατίον δε νοημαλος αναμαρτήτως υπηρέτευλα, ελος τα μεγιστα μεν
πρατίων οραται, τοδε δε οικονομων αօραλος ημιν εστιν. *Xenoph.*
Memorabil. lib. iv. c. iii. s. 6.

No. 13.

Miscellaneous Passages of Pagan Authors, collated with others in the New Testament.

1. Matt. v. 28.

Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum
Facti crimen habet. *Juv. Sat. xiii. v. 210.*
Quæ, quia non liceat, non facit, illa facit :
Ut jam servâris bene corpus, adultera mens est,
Omnibus occlusis, intus adulter erit. *Ovid.*

Incesta est etiam sine stupro, quæ cupid
stuprum. *Seneca.* Fecit quisque quantum vo
luit. *Idem.*

2. Mark, xii. 33.

Tum illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile
videtur, sit autem necessarium, ut nihilo sese
plus quam alterum diligat. *Cic. de Leg. lib. i.*

3. Rom. viii. 28.

Nec enim viro bono mali quicquam evenire potest, nec vivo, nec mortuo, nec unquam ejus res a Diis Immortalibus negligentur. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* lib. i. c. 81.

4. Luke, xxii. 26.

Si vis ad summum progredi, ab infimo ordire.
Varro.

5. Heb. x. 22.

Vultisne Deum cogitare magnum et placidum et majestate leni verendum, amicum, et semper in proximo? Non immolationibus et sanguine multo colendum, sed mente purâ, honestoque proposito. Non templa illi, congestis in altitudinem saxis extruenda sunt. In suo cuique consecrandum est pectore. *Seneca apud Lactant.*

6. Philemon, 16.

Servi sunt? imo homines. Servi sunt? imo contubernales. Servi sunt? imo humiles amici. Servi sunt? imo conservi; si cogitaveris tantundem in utrosque licere fortunæ. *Senec. Epist. 47.*

7. John, ix. 31.

Tu potius Deos comprecare, nam tibi certe scio
Quo vir melius multo es, quam ego, obtemperaturos magis.

Ter. Adelph. act. iv. scen. 6.

8. Matt. v. 4, and 2 Cor. xii. 10.

Optimos esse nos dum infirmi sumus. *Plin.*

9. Matt. v. 7.

Bona comparat præsidia misericordia. *Terent.*

10. Matt vii. 3.

————— æquum est

Peccatis veniam poscentem reddere rursum.

Hor.

11. Matt. xxvi. 41, and Rom. vii. 15.

————— aliudque Cupido,
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor. *Ovid. Metam.* lib. vii. v. 20.

12. 1 Thess. v. 3.

Ah miser! si quis primo perjuria celat,
Sera tamen tacitis pœna venit pedibus. *Tibul.*

13. Acts, xvii. 27.

Miraris hominem ad Deos ire? Deus ad hominem venit, imo (quod proprius est) in homines venit. *Senec. Epist.* 73.

14. 1 John, iii. 21.

————— Hic murus aheneus esto,
Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ. *Hor.*

15. Rom. xii. 21.

Vincit malos pertinax bonitas.

Senec. de Benefic. lib. 7. c. 31.

16. Rom. xii. 20.

Bono vinci satius est, quam malo more injuriam vincere. *Sal.*

17. Rom. xii. 5, and 1 Cor. xii. 15.

Quid si nocere velint manus pedibus? manibus oculi? ut omnia inter se membra consen-tiunt, quia singula servari, totius interest: ita homines singulis parcent, quia ad cœtum geniti sumus. *Senec. de Ira. lib. ii. c. 31.*

18. Matt. v. 11.

Ei rei do operam, ut mihi falsò male dicatur.
Cato apud Charis.

19. Ephes. iv. 26.

Quo quis enim major, magis est placabilis iræ;
Et faciles motus mens generosa capit. *Ovid.*
Candida pax homines, trux decet ira feras.

Idem.

20. John, iv. 24, and Luke, vi. 46.

O curvæ in terras animæ, et cœlestium inanes!
Quid juvat hoc, templis nostros immittere mores,
Et bona Dîs ex hâc sceleratâ ducere pulpâ?

Pers. Sat. ii. v. 61.

21. Luke, vi. 29.

Οὐλος κρατιστὸς εστ' αὐτῷ, ω Γοργία,
Ος τις αδικεισθάτι πλειστὸς επιστάται βροτῶν. *Menander.*

22. Matt. v. 34.

Μη ομνύατε θεοὺς· ασκεῖτε γὰρ αὐτῶν δειν αἰξιοπιστῶν παρεχεῖν.
Pythagoras.

Ορκον δὲ φευγε καὶ δικαιως ομνυήσ. *Menand.*

23. 1 Tim. vi. 8.

Εσθῆτος γὰρ οὐματικαὶ σκεπτῆς καὶ τροφῆς δεομέθα.

Aristides.

24. Luke, vi. 31.

Α πασχοντες υφ' εἰερων οργιζεσθε, ταῦτα τοις αλλοις μη ποιεῖτε. *Isoc. Nicocles, vol. i. p. 116. Edit. Battie.*

25. 1 Thess. v. 22.

Μη μονον απεχεσθε των αμαρτημάτων, αλλα καὶ των επιήδευμάτων των τοιτών, εν οις αναγκαῖον εστιν υποψιαν γινεσθαί.
Idem, p. 112.

26. 1 Peter, ii. 17.

Τον μεν θεον φοβετο· Τοὺς δὲ γονεῖς τιμα· Τοὺς δὲ φιλάς αισχυνετο· Τοις δὲ νομοῖς πειθετο. *Idem ad Demonic. p. 25.*

27. Ephes. v. 3, and iv. 29.

Α ποιειν αισχρον, ταῦτα νομιζε μηδε λεγειν ειναι καλον.
Idem, p. 24.

28. Matt. vi. 16.

Ἐθιξε σεαυτὸν ειναι μη σκυθρωπον, αλλα συννεν. *Idem, p. 24.*

29. Matt. vii. 13.

Οι πλειονες κακοι. *Bias.*

Rari quippe boni. *Juv.*

Pauci — quos æquus amavit Jupiter. *Virg.*

Bonus ille, alter Phœnix. *Senec.*

30. 1 Cor. iii. 18.

Ει βουλει αγαθος ειναι, πρωτον πιστευσον οτι κακος ει.
Epictet. Frag. p. 741. *Edit. Upton.*

31. Mark, x. 23.

Ο πλειος, ου των αγαθων· ή πολυτελεια, των κακων. *Idem,*
p. 748.

Non est summa felicitatis nostræ in carne ponenda. *Senec. Epist.* 74.

32. Matt. vii. 1, 2.

Μη προτερον ειερω δικαστηριῳ δικασῃς, πριν αυτος παρα τη
δικη κριθησ. *Idem*, p. 762.

33. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

Συγγνωμη τιμωριας αμεινων· το μεν γαρ ημερ8 φυσεως
εστι, το δε θηριωδες. *Idem*, p. 764.

34. Matt. xv. 19.

Α μη δει ποιειν, μηδε υπονος ποιειν. *Idem*, p. 775.

Ανηρ δικαιος εστιν εχ ὁ μη αδικων,

Αλλ' οστις αδικειν δυναμενος μη βαλεται.

Philemon.

35. Coloss. iv. 6.

Αναγενεσθω ὁ περι Θεών λογός καθ' ημέραν, μᾶλλον η τα στίλια. *Idem*, p. 779. Συνεχεστερον νοεῖ τὸν Θεόν, η αναπνει. *Idem*, p. 780.

36. Luke, vi. 46.

Το μεμνησθαι Θεων, και οτι περ ε κολακευεσθαι γιοι θελεσιν αλλα εξομοιεσθαι εαυτοις. *Antonin. lib. x. s. 9.*

37. John, viii. 34.

Ουδεις αμαρτιων ελευθερος εστιν. *Epictet. lib. ii. c. i.*

38. Matt. vi. 6.

Οταν κλεισηλε τας θυρας και σκολος ενδον ποιησητε, μεμνησθε μηδεποτε λεγειν οι μονοι εστε· ε γαρ εστε, αλλ' ο Θεος ενδον εστι. *Epictet. lib. i. c. 14.*

39. Rom. viii. 26.

Ζευ βασιλευ, τα μεν εσθλα και ευχομενοις και ανευκλοις
Αμμι διδο· τα δε δεινα και ευχομενοις απαλεξειν.

Poeta apud Plat.

40. Matt. vii, 13, 14.

Ευρειατ μεν γαρ ατραποι βιων· ολιγαι δε δι' ας δαιμονες ανθρωπος αγγοιν. *Plutarch. de Socrat. Daemon.*

41. Matt. xii. 34.

————— Ανδρος χαρακτηρ εκ λογω γνωριζειαι.

Menander.

Οιος ὁ τρόπος, τοιούτος καὶ ὁ λόγος.

Aristides.

42. Matt. xxii. 30.

Οὐ γαρ σίlon εἰδεσ', οὐ πινεσ' αἴθοπα οινον·

Τενεκ' αναιμονες εἰσι καὶ αἴθαναλοι καλεούται.

Hom.

Πῶς αν εἰεν αἱδίοις δεομενοι τροφης; *Aristot. Metaphys.*

43. Luke, xi. 2, and Matt. vi. 9.

Θεος — ὁ παντων δέσποινς

Οὐ τυνομα φοβερον, εδὲ αν ονομασαιμ' εγω. *Menander.*

44. Acts, xxiv. 15.

Καὶ γαρ καθ' αδην δυο τριβες νομιζομεν,

Μιαν δικαιων, χ' ἀτεραν ασεβων οδουν.

Diphilus.

45. Rom. xi. 33.

Αλλ' ου γαρ αν τα θεια κρυπτονιος Θεω

Μαθοις αν, εδὲ ει παντ' επεξελθοις σκοπων.

Sophoc.

46. John, xii. 26.

Τιμησεις τον Θεον αριστα, εαν τω Θεω την διανοιαν ομοιωσης. Ο γαρ αγαπᾷ τις, και μιμειται οσον αὐτῷ οιον τε. *Hierocles.*

47. John, ix. 31.

Ευχης δικαιας ουκ ανηκοος Θεος. *Græc. Prov.*

48. Luke, xii. 15.

Μηδε βελονης εναχυμ' επιθυμης.

Menander, p. 268. edit. Clerici.

49. Matt. xvi. 26.

Ων τοις θεοις ανθρωπος ευχέλαι τυχειν,
Της αδαναστας κρειτιον οδεν ευχέλαι. *Posidippus.*

50. 1 Cor. vii. 21. and Luke vi. 20.

Δελος Επικληλος γενομην και σωματι πηρος,
Και πενιην ιρος, και φιλος αδαναλοις. *Epitaph. Epictet.*

51. 1 Cor. ix. 27.

Αν δε το σωματιον θαυμασω, δελον εμαυλον παραδεδωκα.
Epictet. lib. i. c. 25.

52. Ephes. v. 18.

Ειπ' ουχ απαντων εστι το μεθυειν κακον
Μεγιστον ανθρωποισι και θλαβερωιαλον; *Alexis.*

53. Ephes. vi. 1—3.

Ελπιζε τιμων τας γονεις πραξειν καλως. *Græc. Prov.*
Ικανως βιωσεις γηροβοσκων θες γονεις. *Idem.*

54. 1 Tim. ii. 9.

Γυναικι κοσμος ο τροπος, η ου χρυσια. *Græc. Prov.*
Probitas est carbunculus. *Laberius.*

55. 1 Cor. xv. 10.

Αυτος πολλα αμαρτλανεις, και αλλος τοιχιος ειρ και ει τινων
δε αμαρτηματων απεχη, αλλα την γε εξιν ποιηικην εξεις, ει
και δια δειλιαν, η δοξοκοπιαν, η τοιχιο τι κακον απεχη των
ομοιων αμαρτηματων. *Antonin. lib. xi. c. 18.*

56. Heb. xii. 11.

Αρ' εν τοις ιατρευεσθαις ηδὺ εστί, καὶ χαιρουσιν οἱ ιατρευομένοι;
εκεὶ εμοιγε δοκεῖ. Αλλά ὡφελιμον γέ. *Plato, Gorgias.*

57. Ephes. iv. 25.

Αεὶ κρατιστὸν εστί τὸ αληθῆ λεγεῖν
Ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ τούτῳ εγὼ παρεγγυῶ
Εἰς ασφαλεῖαν τῷ βιῷ πλειστὸν μέρος.

Menand. p. 182.

58. 2 Peter, iii. 12.

Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur, affore tempus
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia cœli
Ardeat. *Ovid. Metam. lib. i. v. 256.*

59. 1 Peter, iii. 9.

Τατες δει τηρεντα, και μη θορυβεμενον, μηδε τοις δυσχε-
ραινεστιν αιιδυσχεραινοντα, περαινειν οδῳ το προκειμενον.
Antonin. lib. vi. c. 26.

60. Heb. xiii. 16.

Αἰδει θεες, σωζει αὐθρωπες· βραχυς ὁ θεος· εἰς καρπος της
επιγειεις ζωης, διαθεσις οσια και πραξεις κοινωνικαι. *Antonin.*
lib. vi. c. 30.

61. Matt. v. 45.

Οι θεοι αδαναλοι οὐλεις & δυσχεραινεστιν, οἱ εν τοστιω αιωνι-
δεησει αὐλις παντως αει τοιτιων οὐλων και τοστιων φαυλων
ανεχεσθαι. *Antonin. lib. vii. c. 70.*

Ecce sceleratis sol oritur, et piratis patent
maria. *Senec. de Ira, lib. 4.*

62. 1 John, v. 14.

Τις δε σοι ειπεν, οἵσι ουχὶ καὶ εἰς τὰ εφ' ημῖν οἱ θεοὶ συλλαμβάνεσσιν; αρέσαι γνη περι τοιῶν ευχεσθαί, καὶ οψει.
Antonin. lib. ix. c. 40.

63. Rom. ix. 20.

Ορᾶς γαρ καὶ αὐτὸς, οἵ τελο παραζητῶν δικαιολογη προς τον Θεον. *Antonin. lib. xii. v. 5.*

64. 1 Cor. iv. 7.

Οὐλοι τα χρηματὶ ιδια κεκληται βροτοι.
 Τα των θεων δὲ εχοντες επιμελεμενα.
 Οταν δε χρηξωσ', αυτ' αφαιρενται παλιν.
Eurip. Phæniss.

65. Ephes. vi. 18.

Οταν σοι προσπιπή τι των τοιελων δογματων, ιδι επι τας αποδιοπομπησεις, ιδι επι θεων απόλροπαιων ιερα ικετης. *Plato. de Leg. lib. ix. vol. ii. p. 854. Edit. Serrani.*

66. Col. iii. 23.

Πειρασθαι συν τοις θεοις αρχεσθαι παντος εργυ. Επι παση ορμη καὶ σμικρε καὶ μεγαλε πραγματος, Θεου αει δει καλειν. *Xenoph. Ἐconom.*

67. Philip. ii. 3.

Nihil opinionis causâ, omnia conscientiæ facta.
Senec. Nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert. Plin. Epist. lib. i. 22.

68. Matt. v. 11.

Æquissimo animo ad honestum consilium per medium infamiam tendam. Nemo mihi videtur pluris æstimare virtutem, nemo illi magis esse devotus, quām qui boni viri famam perdidit, ne conscientiam perderet. *Senec. Epist. 81.*

69. John, xvii. 3.

Ἡ γνωσίς τῶν θεων ἀρέη τε εστὶ καὶ σοφία καὶ εὐδαιμονία τελεία. *Iamblicus.*

70. Ephes. v. 1. and John, xiii. 17.

Τοις μεν γαρ θεοις πας ο θεος μακαριος· τοις δ' ανθρωποις,
εφ' οσον ομοιωμα τι της τοισυνής ενεργειας υπαρχει.

Aristot. Ethic. Nicom. lib. x. c. 8.

71. Rom. vii. 24.

Imo vero ii vivunt qui ex corporum vinculis,
tanquam ē carcere, evolaverunt. Vestra vero
quæ dicitur vita, mors est. *Cic. in Som. Scip.*

72. Matt. x. 28.

Ει ταυτη τοις Θεοις φιλον, ταυτη γινεσθω. Εμε δε Ανυλος
και Μελιος αποκλειναι μεν δυνανται, βλαψαι δε ε. *Epict.
Enchirid. c. 79.*

73. Ephes. iv. 4—6.

Κοσμος τε γαρ εις δια απαντων, και Θεος εις δια παντων,
και εστια μια, και νομος εις, λογος κοινος παντων των νοερων

ζωων, και αληθεια μια· ειγέ και τελειοτης μια των ομογενων,
και τις αυτις λογις μετεχοντων ζωων.

Antoninus, lib. vii. sect. 9.

74. 2 Cor. iii. 18. and Jude, 10.

Επει αν ο καὶ αρείην βίος της θείας ομοιωσεως αντεχομενος
τῷ οντι θείος εστιν, ο δε εν κακιᾳ θηριωδης και αδεος· δηλον
ως η μεν τις σπεδαις ηδονη την θείαν ευφροσυνην μιμεῖται νω
και Θεω συνεπομενη, η δε τις φαυλες ηδονη λεγομενη προς την
θηριωδη και εμπληκτον ομοιοτάται κινησιν. *Hierocles.*

75. John iv. 23.

Μονος ιερευς ο σοφος, μονος θεοφιλης, μονος ειδως ευξασθαι.
Μονος γαρ οιδε τιμᾶν (τον θεον) —— ο προηγγελεως ιερειον
εαυτον προσαγων, και αγαλμα θειον τεκλαινων την εαυτη ψυχην,
και ναν εις υποδοχην τις θειες φωλος τον εαυτη παρασκευαζων
νεν. *Hierocles.*

76. Heb. xii. 22.

Καλλος δε τοτε ην ιδειν λαμπρου, οτε συν ευδαιμονι χορω
μακαριαν οψιν τε και θεαν επομενοι μετα μεν Διος ημεις, αλλοι
δε μετ' αλλας Θεων, ειδον τε και ειελευθο τελειων ην θεμις
λεγειν μακαριωτατην. *Plato in Phaedro. p. 250.*
vol. iii. *Edit. Serrani.*

77. 2 Peter iii. 10.

Εσται γαρ εσται κεινος αιωνων χρονος,
Οταν πυρος γεμοντα θησαυρον σχασῃ
Χρυσωπος αιθηρ, &c.
Sophoc. apud Justin. Martyr. p. 82. Edit. Sylburg.

Χρονος δε εν μετ' οραντι γεγονεν· ιδια αμα γεννηθειλες αμα και λυθωσιν, αν ποιε λυσις τις αιων γενηται. *Platon. Timæus*, p. 38. vol. iii.

78. Heb. iv. 12. and 13.

Itaque talis (*i. e. bonus*) vir non modo facere, sed ne cogitare quidem quicquam audebit, quod non audeat prædicare. Purgemus igitur conscientiam, quæ oculis Dei pervia est, et, (*ut ait idem,*) semper ita vivamus, ut rationem reddendam nobis arbitremur; putemusque nos momentis omnibus, non in aliquo orbis terræ theatro ab hominibus, sed desuper spectari ab eo, qui et judex et testis idem futurus est; cui rationem vitæ reposcenti, actus suos inficiari non licebit. *Cic. apud Lactant. lib. 6.*

79. James, i. 17.

Αρειη — εἰε φυσει, εἰε διδαχηον, αλλα θεια μοιρα παραγιγνομενη. *Platonis Meno*, p. 99. vol. ii. *Edit. Serrani.*

80. Matt. v. 34.

Ορκου παραιησαι, ει μεν οιον τε, εις απαν· ει δε μη, εκ ιων ενοντων. *Epict. Enchirid. c. 44.*

81. Matt. xxv. 46.

Εις τελος γαρ οι μεν εσθλοι τυγχανεσσιν αξιων,
Οι κακοι δ', ασπερ πεφυκασ', επορ ευπραξειαν αν.
Eurip. Ion. v. 1621.

82. James, i. 17.

νομοι προκεινται

Τψιποδες γ' ερανιαν δι' αιθερα
 Τεκνωθεντες· ων Ολυμπος
 Παληρ μονος, οδε νιν θνατα
 Φυσις ανερων ετικλεν· οδε
 Μεν ποιε λαδα καλακοιμασει.

Sophoc. Edip. Tyr. v. 878.

83. Ephes. iv. 18.

Heu primæ scelerum causæ mortalibus ægris,
 Naturam nescire Deûm ! *Sil. Ital. lib. iv. v. 795.*

84. Luke xii. 6.

Λεγεται δε και ειερως κοσμος η των ολων ταξις τε και δια-
 κοσμησις, υπο Θεων τε και δια Θεον φυλαττομενη. *Aristot.
 de Mundo, c. 2.*

85. Matt. xv. 8.

Τες μεν γαρ αδικις, βωμον ουχ ιζειν εχρην,
 Αλλ' εξελωνειν ἐδε γαρ ψωμειν καλον
 Θεων πονηραν χειρα, τοισι δε ενδικοις
 Ιερα καδιζειν, οσηις ηδικειτ', εχρην.
 Και μη πι τ' αυτο τελι ιοντ' εχειν ισον,
 Του τ' εσθλον οντα, του τε μη, θεων παρα.

Eurip. Ion. v. 1315.

86. Matt. vii. 3.

Απαντεις εσμεν εις το ουδετειν σοφοι.
Αυτοι δ' οταν σφαλωμεν, ο γινωσκομεν.

Eurip. Frag. p. 507. Edit. Barnes.

87. 1 John, iii. 15.

Latro est, etiam antequam manus inquietet :
quia ad occidendum jam armatus est, et habet
spoliandi atque interficiendi voluntatem.

Senec. de Benefic. lib. v. c. 14.

88. Rom. xii. 2.

Intelligo, Lucili, non emendari me tantum,
sed transfigurari, &c. *Idem, Epist. 6.*

89. 1 Cor. x. 31.

Sic vive cum hominibus, tanquam Deus vi-
deat, sic loquere cum Deo, tanquam homines
audiant. *Idem, Epist. 10.*

90. James, v. 16.

Quare vitia sua nemo confitetur ? quia etiam
nunc in illis est. Somnium narrare vigilantis
est ; vitia sua confiteri sanitatis indicium est.

Idem, Epist. 53.

91. Rom. iii. 23.

*Peccavimus omnes : alii gravia, alii leviora, alii
ex destinato, alii forte impulsi, aut alienā nequitia
ablati ; alii in bonis consiliis parum fortiter ste-*
oo 3

timus, et innocentiam inviti ac renitentes perdidimus. Nec delinquimus tantum, sed usque ad extremum ævi delinquemus.

Idem, de Clement. lib. i. c. 6.

The only reflection which I would offer on the foregoing passages is this, that we should be extremely cautious of claiming for any *particular* moral precept of Christianity, a perfect and entire originality. This remark, indeed, will serve to rectify and limit our own observations on this subject. In our Chapter on the Morality of the Gospel, we have stated, in common with many other writers, that one of its distinguishing features arose from its placing the restraint upon the *motive* rather than upon the *external act*. But we have here adduced many passages from the ancient writers, in which the same moral criterion is enforced.* So also, it was mentioned that the ancients in general passed over the duties which are technically styled of *imperfect obligation*. Yet Seneca reprobates that virtue which did not extend “extra publicas tabulas. Angusta est innocentia ad legem bonum esse.” *De Ira, lib. ii. c. 27.*

The general conclusion to be drawn is this: that though the *particular* precepts of Christian

* Facilius est initia affectuum prohibere, quam impetum regere. *Senec.*

morality are to be found scattered in the best writers of antiquity; yet that the *system itself* did not exist till it was published by Christ and his apostles, and that this agreement between reason and Revelation is to be viewed as a powerful exemplification of the connection between Natural and Revealed Theology, but as in no degree tending to diminish the necessity or importance of the Christian Revelation.

The following sublime prayer of Simplicius may serve as a specimen of the adorations of the more serious and philosophic Pagans :

Ιχετευω τε, Δεσποια, ο παληρ και ηγεμων τω ευ ημιν λογις,
υπομνησθηναι μεν ημας της εαυτων ευγενειας ης ηξιωθημεν
παρα σα, συμπραξαι δε ως αυλοκινητοις ημιν προς τε καδαρσιν
την απο τω σωματος και των αλογων παθων, και προς το
υπερεχειν και αρχειν αυτων, και ως οργανοις κεχρησθαι κατα
του προσηκονια τροπον· και προς διορθωσιν ακριβη τω εν ημιν
λογις, και ενωσιν αυτις προς Ια οντως οντα, δια τω της αληθειας
φωιος· και το τριον, τον σωτηρα ικετευω, αφελειν τελεως την
αχλυν των ψυχικων ημων ομματων, “Οφρα γινωσκομεν ευ
(κατα τον Ομηρον) η μεν θεον, η δε και ανδρα.”

In the selection of the above passages, it has not been thought necessary to make any distinction between those writers who lived before and those who were subsequent to the Christian era, because it did not appear that any material

difference could hence arise as to the *purpose* for which their opinions were cited. Since it is plain that neither Seneca nor Epictetus, much less that Porphyry or Julian, could have been led to adopt any moral sentiment out of *deference* to the sentiments of Christianity ; it is evident that their agreement with it must have been forced upon them by its intimate connection with the suggestions of reason. *Habes confidentem reum.* In this respect, the following acknowledgements of Julian are too valuable to be omitted. He is addressing the chief priest of Galatia, and urging him to support the cause of expiring paganism : —

Παραινεσον τερει μηλε θεατρω παραβαλλειν, μηλε εν καπηλειω πινειν, η τεχνης θνος και εργασιας αισχρας και επονειδιστης προιστασθαι. Ξενοδοχεια καθ' εκαστην πολιν καλασησον πυκνα, ιν' απολαωσωσιν οι ξενοι της παρ' ημων φιλανθρωπιας, & των ημετερων μονου, αλλα και αλλων οστις αν δεηθη χρηματων. — Αισχρων γαρ οι των μεν Ιεδαιων θδεις μεταιτετρεφθσι δε οι δυσσεβεις Γαλιλαιοι προς της εωιων, και θεις ημετερως οι δε ημετεροι της παρ' ημων επικουριας ενδεεις φαιγονται. Διδασκε δε και συγεισφερειν θεις Ελληνιστας εις θαυματας λειτουργιας. *Juliani Opera, p. 325. Paris, 1583.*

“ Julian beheld with envy the wise and humane regulations of the church ; and he very frankly confesses his intention to deprive the Christians

of the applause, as well as advantage, which they had acquired by the exclusive practice of charity and beneficence. — But if these imaginary plans of reformation had been realised, the forced and imperfect copy would have been less beneficial to Paganism, than honourable to Christianity.” *Gibbon’s Decline and Fall*, vol. iv. ch. 23.

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